PROSPECTIVE BALANCE: LOSS AVERSION AND CONSISTENCY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Robert M. Scott

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2012

ABSTRACT

Prospective Balance: Loss Aversion and Consistency in International Relations

Robert M. Scott

Prospective Balance in an interactionist systemic theory that utilizes the concepts of non-additivity and non-linearity to better explain the incidence of cooperation and conflict. The theory argues against neorealism in which the distribution of power in the international system purports to explain the phenomenon of interest. Balance theory is a manifestation of non-additivity, while attitudinal consistency is a manifestation of non-linearity. Balanced and imbalanced configurations comprise balance theory. Rational and irrational consistency comprise attitudinal consistency. In turn, cognitive (or unmotivated) biases and affective (or motivated) biases comprise irrational consistency. Both balance and attitudinal consistency serve as independent variables. The dynamics of prospect theory, in which states are risk acceptant for loss but risk averse for gain, and the dynamics of deterrence theory serve as intervening variables. Characteristic actor behaviors, identified as perceptual syndrome, intentional clarity, widespread loss aversion, and affective abandonment of rational consistency, comprise the outcomes to be explained. Because neorealism is predicated upon maximizing rationality, its predicate is expected utility theory, in which states take actions should they provide benefits in excess of costs with appropriate utilities and probabilities considered. Because of this orientation, neorealism is unable to explain instances in which states engage in conflict that has little rational basis

for success, on the one hand, and instances in which states cooperate with one another when aggression has a reasonable chance of success, on the other hand. By adopting prospect precepts, Prospective Balance provides a more powerful explanation of this puzzling behavior. Case studies selected from early to later 19th-century Europe serve as the empirical basis for analyzing in detail two of the characteristic behaviors, that of widespread loss aversion, and that of affective abandonment.

Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables

Acknowledgments

A special thank-you to Professor Robert Jervis for his unstinting criticism, yet wise counsel and encouragement, over an extended period of time. Professors Richard K. Betts, Michael W. Doyle, Alexander A. Cooley, and Bruce Cronin provided insightful criticism and suggestions for improving the work. Two professors of English linguistics, my father, Charles T. Scott, especially, and Jon L. Erickson, longtime family friend, graciously read drafts of the work and offered needed corrections to my prose.

Dedication

To my parents, Charles T. and Anne M. Scott.

Introduction.

In international relations, anarchy means that there is neither an overarching sovereign to enforce cooperative agreements among states nor to punish those states that aggress against another. Situations in which states find themselves can change and different leaders may come to power with different ideas as how to relate with others.[1] Therefore, realism teaches that states must be self-regarding and existentially prepared to defend themselves. Because intentions can change, the capabilities that a state can bring to bear for military action are closely monitored by other states. Neorealist theory largely focuses on the distribution of power within the international system at any particular time in order to explain and predict the degree of stability and peacefulness.[2] Intentions tend to be given short shrift. Yet, serious questions are raised by neorealism's explanatory, and predictive, power, respectively. During the Cold War, the United States, as the overarching sovereign, welcomed an increase in the power of its allies in Europe and the Far East.[3] After the Soviet Union disintegrated (something not contemplated by neorealism) and the communist threat disappeared there was little noticeable worry on the part of the United States regarding the power of its

---

[1] Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," World Politics, vol. 30, no. 2 (January 1978), p. 168.
[2] Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (New York: Random House, 1979).
[3] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 14.

former Cold War allies. Moreover, those allies have not fallen into conflict with one another as was predicted by a more extreme version of neorealism.[4]

Interactionist theories of international relations provide a useful counterpoint to neorealism's structuralism. Balance, which is a manifestation of consistency more generally, is one such theory with the potential to provide better explanations of interstate behavior regarding cooperation and conflict. Originally developed by cognitive psychologists for interpersonal relations, consistent relations provide a good form, or Gestalt, and so simplify the manner in which we come to understand our social environment.[5] Following the Arab proverbs, friends tend to be friends of friends, friends of enemies tend to be enemies, and enemies of enemies tend to be friends. Many social and political patterns of relationships tend to be balanced; thus balance is a psychological shortcut to understanding our environment that brings informational benefits in

---

[4] John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," in Sean M. Lynn-Jones, ed., The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 141-92. According to this scholar, China is next primary adversary of the United States. See, Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001). For a critique of Mearsheimer's position, see Matthew Rendall, "Defensive Realism and the Concert of Europe," Review of International Studies, vol. 32 (2006), pp. 523-39.

[5] See, generally, Fritz Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: Wiley, 1958); Theodore M. Newcomb, Social Psychology (New York: Dryden, 1951); Robert P. Abelson, et. al., Theories of Cognitive Consistency: A Sourcebook (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1968); Robert B. Zajonc, "Cognitive Theories in Social Psychology," in Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson, eds., The Handbook of Social Psychology, 2nd ed. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1968), pp. 320-411. For an application to international relations, see, Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), Chapter Four.

excess of costs.[6] We are rationally consistent when reasoning in this manner.[7] At first blush, Simon's concept of bounded rationality has much in common with this approach.[8] Yet, when the stimuli do not fit balanced patterns decision-makers can make serious errors regarding the motives and intentions of others. Inadequate and inappropriate deterrent strategies can be crafted that bring about unintended and undesired conflict.

A mediated stimulus response method of examination[9] is useful in which the state attempts to determine the other's intentions as demonstrated by the latter's recent actions (or what Jones and Davis refer to as inferences from acts to dispositions).[10] The state then determines whether and to what degree it needs to deter the other in order to protect its interests. The other, in turn, reacts to the state's deterrent actions resulting in peaceful or conflictual outcomes. Peaceful outcomes are usually the result of more accurate mutual perceptions than of inaccurate perceptions. Conflict can be the result of accurate perceptions, but it is usually the result of misperceptions. Thus, it is important to distinguish balanced

---

[6] Jervis, Perception and Misperception , ibid., p. 118. This is one strength of what Kelley refers to as commonsense inference. See, Harold Kelley, "The Processes of Causal Attribution," American Psychologist, vol. 28, no. 2 (February 1973), pp. 107-28.
[7] Jervis, Perception and Misperception, ibid., Chapter Four.
[8] Herbert A. Simon, Models of Bounded Rationality (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982); Thierry Balzacq and Jervis, "Logic of mind and international system: a journey with Robert Jervis," Review of International Studies, vol. 30, no. 4 (2004), p. 565.
[9] Jervis, "Introduction," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, op. cit., p. 2.
[10] Edward E. Jones and Keith E. Davis, "From Acts to Dispositions: The Attribution Process in Person Perception," in Leonard Berkowitz, ed., Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, vol. 2 (New York: Academic Press, 1965), pp. 219-266.

and imbalanced configurations from rational and irrational attitudinal consistency. Misperceptions can result from two very different failures of rationality. First, errors in logical inference can occur even though those charged with directing a state's foreign policy do their best to reason logically. These errors are known as cognitive, or unmotivated, biases. Second, habit or passion can short-circuit logical inference when individuals do not even attempt rational self-control.[11] These dynamics result in affective, or motivated, biases.[12] Unmotivated and motivated errors can be very important in explaining the other's seemingly irrational actions as well as those of the state. Cognitive biases result from shortcuts to processing information and would be corrected were the errors pointed out. In contrast, motivated biases tend to be manifested in rationalizations for policies that serve particular interests, usually resulting from domestic politics.[13] It may be impossible to deter actors that are driven by such motivated biases; thus, a reconsideration of the costs and benefits of deterrence

---

[11] Summarized by Jack Hirschleifer, "The Expanding Domain of Economics," American Economic Review, vol. 75, no. 6., Centennial Essays and 1985 Survey of Members (December 1985), p. 59.

[12] According to McDermott, "affect refers to the way people represent the value of things as good or bad; it can include preferences as well as emotions and moods. Moods are amorphous states—like emotions, but without specific objects or referents. Finally, feelings are the actual experience of value" (Rose McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," Perspectives on Politics, vol. 2, no. 4 (December 2004), p. 692.

[13] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., pp. 18-27.

versus conciliation may be in order[14] although very difficult to achieve because of the cognitive biases of the deterring state.

A primary problem with balance theory as it has been applied to international relations is that its explanatory power is underspecified. Inconsistent (or imbalanced) relations occur in a statistical sense and thus need to be explained.[15] But the explanations tend to be relegated to an actor's values, calculations, idiosyncracies, blunders, and leadership skills that do not reside at the systemic level.[16] But, at bottom, balance theory is as psychological as it is systemic in nature. Thus, it is odd that scholarly treatments of the theory employ a version of bounded rationality known as expected utility theory to determine the intentions of actors. Costs and risks are balanced against the benefits with appropriate probabilities attached to such factors. The status quo is arbitrary and actions will generally be taken if benefits exceed costs with due consideration of the risks.

A more powerful psychological theory known as prospect theory can buttress consistency theory in order to provide more determinate explanations and predictions of cooperation and conflict. According to prospect theory, the status quo is crucial in determining the calculations of actors. Actors will take

---

[14] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," International Security, vol. 7, no. 3 (Winter 1982-83), p. 14.
[15] Jervis, Systems Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 210.
[16] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Paul Lauren, ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: Free Press, 1979), pp. 226-27.

risky and aggressive actions to return themselves to the status quo but they will act quite conservatively when contemplating actions that could improve their positions. In identical situations, actors will take different actions depending on how the issue is framed.[17] If loss aversion is widespread and a common understanding of the status quo prevails,[18] imbalanced patterns will obtain to the extent that states only provisionally ally with one another to defend what they have and not to make opportunistic gains. Sustained interaction will generate cross-cutting interests as states work with others to defend what they have and to meliorate conflicts with others with whom they have other common interests. Deterrence, which is easier than compellence, should prevail.[19]

Yet, when states believe that they are losing, they will take risky actions to return to the status quo. They may come to believe that a failure to fight for their values and interests will result in significant losses. Cognitive biases enter here as states fail to understand that their actions can inadvertently threaten others' interests. Believing that they are defending the status quo, each side can overestimate the others' hostility and come to believe that the latter are merely

---

[17] Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Rational choice and the framing of decisions," Journal of Business, vol. 59, no. 4, Part 2: The Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory (October 1986), pp. S251-S278; Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," Political Psychology, vol. 13, no. 2, Special Issue: Prospect Theory and Political Psychology (June 1992), pp. 187-204.
[18] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," ibid., p. 192.
[19] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," ibid., p. 192; Thomas Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 69-91.

striving to make opportunistic gains at their expense.[20] Actions taken by another that a disinterested observer is likely to see as ambiguous in intent will be seen as related and confirming by a state disadvantaged by them.[21] Conflict is most likely to occur here[22] because deterrent actions will not dissuade aggression but will merely confirm in the other fearful state that the former intends it harm.[23]

When states are desperate they can take aggressive actions that a disinterested observer believes have little chance of succeeding and thus will surprise others.[24] Status quo states will not understand the circumstances that give rise to the desperate state's actions because the drivers of domestic politics of a particular state tend to be opaque to others.[25] Recent behavior by the desperate state will be perplexing to others because the actions will not seem to serve a useful purpose.[26] In other cases, overestimation (rather than underestimation) of an adequate deterrent threat can take place leading to self-deterrence of the target state.[27] Opportunistic states will be eager to make gains, but even status quo states can improve their positions at little cost and risk when

---

[20] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," ibid., p. 192; Jervis, "War and Misperception," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, vol. 18, no, 4 (Spring 1988), pp. 688-89.
[21] Jones and Davis, in Berkowitz, ed., op. cit., p. 239.
[22] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 192.
[23] Richard K. Betts, "Conventional Deterrence: Predictive Uncertainty and Policy Confidence," World Politics, vol. 37, no. 2 (January 1985), pp. 153-79; Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., pp. 192-93.
[24] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 192.
[25] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 27.
[26] Jones and Davis, op. cit., p. 229.
[27] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 26.

others fail to defend their interests. An advantage of employing prospect theory is that it provides a theoretical linkage between cognitive and affective biases and posits the circumstances under which one or the other will be predominant.[28] When states mutually believe that they are losing regarding the status quo, cognitive biases can hold sway, but when a state feels desperate, affective biases may predominate.[29] An objective determination between mere loss and desperation may be impossible to draw. This is why status quo states remain surprised at actions that a desperate state takes. [30]

Finally, balanced patterns have a real referent when the other is dispositionally motivated to hurt the deterring state. Gross deterrent threats may keep the peace if they leave no ambiguity in the other's mind of the determination of the state to protect its interests and values. War may break out but it will not be the result of mutual misperceptions. But this occurrence should be rarer according to prospect theory than according to expected utility theory. As will be argued, a more common dynamic occurs when ideology and power combine to generate adversarial relations, but loss aversion inhibits the antagonists from attempting to disarm the other with a first-strike attack.

---

[28] Jervis suggests this as an unsolved research problem in "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," but his later analysis in "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," suggests the following formulation.
[29] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., pp. 192-93.
[30] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 195.

Plan of the dissertation.

Chapter 1 will specify in detail the theory outlined above. Balance theory is somewhat agnostic as to whether balanced systems are more peaceful or warlike than imbalanced ones. By grafting prospect theory to consistency theory it is argued that more determinate predictions can be made. Configurations in which irrational consistency prevails, either through cognitive biases or motivated biases, or both, are most likely to end in war.[31] In contrast, rational consistency prevails when loss aversion is widespread and mutually understood. The world ought to be more peaceful than balance theory in which actor calculations are posited on expected utility theory. Rational consistency also prevails when a coherent image of the adversary as being aggressive leads to strong deterrent strategies.[32] Deterrence theory is not defeated if and when war breaks out in such an instance. Some adversaries simply are not deterrable.

The interactionist theory proposed will be tested against neorealist theories that attempt to predict cooperation and conflict on the basis of distinctive distributions of power in the international system. As will be argued in the next chapter, implicit in neorealism's explanatory power is the assumption of maximizing rationality. Thus, expected utility theory is the proximate reason for action-oriented behavior and the primary competitor to prospect theory. Yet,

---

[31] Jervis, Perception and Misperception, op. cit., Chapter Four. In the interview with Balzacq, Jervis allows that, at the time of the writing, the concept of motivated bias did not figure as an aspect of irrational consistency. See, Balzacq and Jervis, op. cit., pp. 564-65.

[32] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," op. cit., p. 23, fn. 31; Jones and Davis, op. cit., p. 229-30.

additional explanatory theories to be tested in head to head tests is not a particularly fruitful manner in which to proceed. This is because psychological models by themselves cannot provide complete explanations of interstate cooperation and conflict. Rather, as Levy argues, "cognition and affect mediate between international and domestic structures and processes and the foreign policy decisions of political leaders, and we need to explain the nature of those reciprocal linkages by integrating psychological variables into more comprehensive theories of foreign policy and strategic interaction."[33]

Chapters 2 through 7 provide case studies to test the hypotheses. Boulding usefully categorizes interactions between putative adversaries as being characterized either by illusory incompatibility or real incompatibility.[34] As will later be demonstrated, the analysis can be further extended to argue that interactions between states can also be characterized by both real compatibility and illusory compatibility. Chapter 2 identifies the Concert of Europe from 1815 until the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854 as a period in which real compatibility existed among the major European powers. Loss aversion was widespread and mutually understood.

Chapters 3 through 7 examine wars precipitated by motivated biases on the parts of leading European statesmen, due to domestic considerations, to

---

[33] Jack S. Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis, eds., Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 274-75.
[34] Kenneth Boulding, "National Images and International Systems," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 3, no. 2 (1959), p. 130. For discussion and criticism of Boulding's concepts, see Jervis, Perception and Misperception, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

revise the status quo. In all of these case studies evidence of illusory compatibility as being crucial to abetting the degree of conflict that eventuated is discovered. Illusory compatibility is manifested in the severely imbalanced patterns of alignment that obtained. Mutual over-, and under-, deterrence, respectively, as well as asymmetric deterrence, in which one actor is under-deterred while his opponent is simultaneously over-deterred, exhaust the theoretical possibilities here. Thus, Chapter 3 examines the diplomacy leading up to and including the Crimean War in which Britain and Russia reluctantly went to war with each other because they repeatedly failed to make clear to each other their determination to protect their respective interests. Mutual over-deterrence eventually resulted in a war that neither side wanted. Chapter 4 examines the Franco-Austrian War of 1859 resulting in the unification of Italy. France, Sardinia, and Austria had motivated biases to precipitate this war but ended up fighting to a stalemate because risk aversion for gain on the parts of outside major powers largely subverted effective intervention. Thus, Italy won by default. Mutual under-deterrence led the combatants to believe that they could fight with impunity.

In Chapters 5 through 7, Germany, under Bismarck, was able to construct an imbalanced system, in part due to the statesman's genius, but also because both England and Russia were largely self-deterred, having absented themselves from European interstate politics. Again, motivated biases prevailed largely for domestic reasons. Prussia was repeatedly under-deterred while third party major

European powers were, at times, self-deterred, as well as over-deterred. Thus, Chapter 5 examines two conflicts that were crucial to dissolving Franco-British cooperation, cooperation that might at least have slowed down German unification or at least required that it legitimately occur under peaceful circumstances. These conflicts were the 1863 Second Polish Uprisng and the 1864 Danish War over the Elbe Duchies. Chapters 6 and 7, examine the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, respectively. (Pre-World War I interstate diplomacy, largely the product of cognitive biases stemming from mutual fears of loss from the status quo, is the paradigm case of illusory incompatibility. Process-tracing those biases on the parts of the participant powers could well comprise a separate full volume and thus will not be attempted here.) Only two of the four systemic dynamics, real compatibility (later characterized as widespread loss aversion), and illusory compatibility (later characterized as affective abandonment), respectively, will be assessed in detail. Thus, Chapter 8 can only provide partial assessments of the validity of the theory of prospective balance.

Chapter 1: Prospective Balance: Loss Aversion and Consistency.

The interrelated dynamics of non-additivity and non-linearity characterize complex systems.[1] In contrast, simple systems, if they can be called systems, are characterized by additivity and linearity.[2] Semi-complex systems can be conceived as hybrids between the two. Non-additivity might be analyzed in a linear vein as might additive systems in which non-linearity prevails. Dyadic arms races are examples of the latter hybrid system. Employing consistency theory with expected utility theory might be seen as an example of a non-additive system in which linear thinking prevails. Yet examining relevant dynamics reveals predictive indeterminacy regarding outcomes of interest. It will be argued that synthesizing consistency theory with prospect theory is an example of a complex system that should provide an improved explanation of cooperation and conflict in international relations.

---

[1] Robert Jervis, System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). Balzacq makes the extremely perceptive observation that these two characteristics are interrelated, something that has not been fully appreciated. See, Thierry Balzacq and Jervis, "Logic of mind and international system: a journey with Robert Jervis," Review of International Studies, vol. 30 (2004), p. 574. Interestingly, in an early article on systems theory Jervis argued that systems were characterized both by interconnectedness and conditionality, the latter of which is the same as the concept of non-additivity. Later work has continued to emphasize non-additivity, but also to incorporate non-linearity. The early systems article is "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Paul Lauren, ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: Free Press, 1979), pp. 212-44 and a later work that shifts is "Systems and Interaction Effects," in Jack Snyder and Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), Chapter 2.

[2] We can largely dispense with the notion of a system when behavioral consequences are additive, linear, and straightforward. On this point see, Jervis, "Systems and Interaction Effects," in Jack Snyder and Jervis, eds., ibid., pp. 25-26.

In developing the theory it is useful to disaggregate balanced and imbalanced patterns, on the one hand, from rationally and irrationally consistent attitudes, on the other hand. Balance is an aspect of consistency theory that is the result of systemic non-additivity. Attitudinal consistency is an aspect of consistency theory that incorporates the concept of non-linearity. Regarding attitudes, we are specifically interested in the consistency that results when judging a policy and the advantages and disadvantages believed to go with that policy and the consequent response to that policy.[3] Responses may be non-linear in scale due to the influence of affect in decision making.[4] Disaggregation and then recombination of these two manifestations of consistency theory should allow for a more fine-grained analysis than previously thought.

Collectively assessing analyses formerly seen in isolation serves to underscore this proposition. The famous comment by Churchill regarding his view of the Soviet Union with regard to Germany, "If Hitler invaded Hell, I would make at least a favorable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons,"[5] is a good example. This comment is used both in Jervis's analysis of balanced systems[6] as well as in his analysis of rational consistency.[7] Here we see

---

[3] Edward Jones and Harold Gerard, Foundations of Social Psychology (New York: Wiley, 1967), pp. 180-81.
[4] Rose McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," Perspectives on Politics, vol. 2, no. 4 (December 2004), pp. 691-706.
[5] Winston Churchill, The Second World War, vol. 3: The Grand Alliance (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), p. 370.
[6] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Lauren, ed., op. cit., p. 228.

an identity of outcomes regarding two different manifestations of consistency theory, which suggests that there is more than just a familial relationship between the two. But, this finding is not dispositive in making the case for the utility of distinguishing the two aspects of consistency theory.

An example in which balance and attitudinal consistency potentially point to different outcomes would be strong evidence in favor of the theory proposed. Regarding the dynamics leading to the outbreak of the First World War, balance theory argues that for Britain to side with France meant opposing Germany. Nevertheless, the hostile inferences that Germany drew were at least partially caused by Britain's lack of empathy with Germany's predicament and this lack of empathy was produced primarily because Britain failed to see (or refused to see) how its own policies harmed German interests.[8] Although the connections were indirect, Britain should have seen that its efforts to ward Russia off from India by encouraging and abetting Russian expansion in Persia and the Balkans would raise life and death questions for Austria, Germany's only reliable ally.[9] Here we see another convergence of outcomes regarding the two different manifestations of consistency theory. But the possibility is held out that a more rationally

---

[7] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 122.
[8] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Lauren, ed., op. cit., p. 238.
[9] Paul W. Schroeder, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Robert Jervis, David Wetzel, and Jack S. Levy, eds., Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 168, 75, 90. Barbara Jelavich, Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

consistent attitude on the part of Britain with implications for consequent German behavior might have materially changed the outcome from one of general war to an object-lesson in crisis management that was ultimately resolved in favor of maintaining the peace.[10]

Having made a preliminary case for the proposed theory, the independent variables of balance and consistency will be related through an analysis of risk aversion. Appropriately, the intervening variables are the utility of deterrence and the dynamics of prospect theory. Multidirectional causality is evident as the dynamics of balance can either reinforce or mitigate the dynamics of consistency, and vice versa, through the mediation of risk aversion. The dependent variable is a characterization of interstate conflict or cooperation and can produce positive or negative feedback[11] to the independent variables as follows:

---

[10] In the article cited above Jervis is pessimistic regarding peaceful prospects, but others are less so, to a point. See, Schroeder, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Jervis, Wetzel, and Levy, eds., Systems, Stability, and Statecraft, ibid., pp. 188-91.

[11] Positive feedback occurs when a change that moves a variable in a particular direction reinforces that directional change. Negative feedback reduces change in one direction by roughly that same amount in the opposite direction. Systems are unstable when positive feedback is present and homeostatically stable when negative feedback occurs. For discussion, see Norbert Wiener, Cybernetics, or Control and Communications in the Animal and Machine, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1961), pp. 6-7.

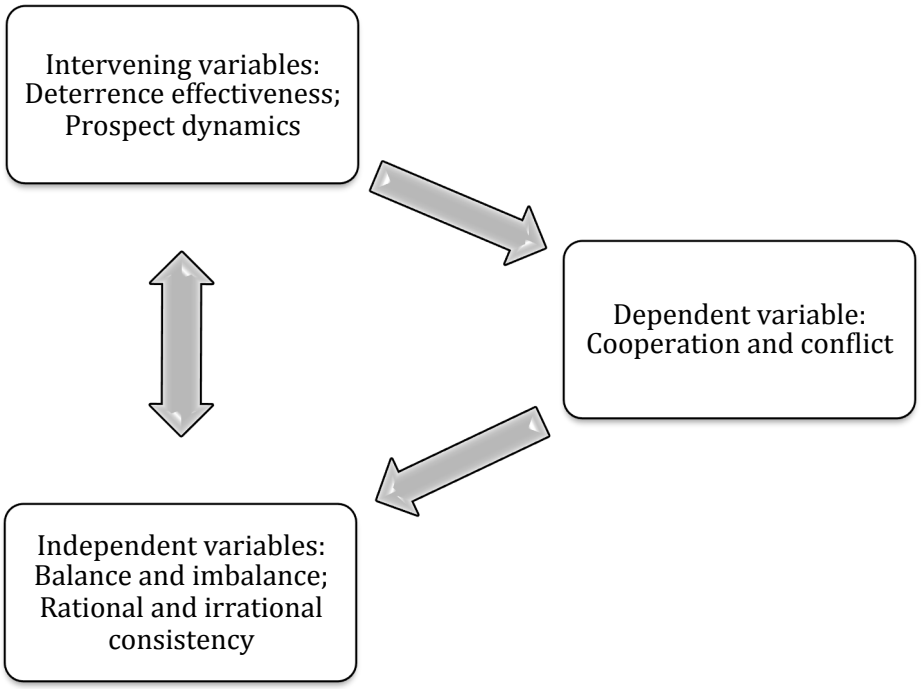

Figure 1: Prospective Balance Theory Schematic

The discussion will begin with a detailed analysis of each independent variable. In so doing, the dynamics of balance and consistency will provisionally be treated as processes, or, alternatively, as intermediate outcomes variously at the levels of the individual decision-maker, dyad, and triad. In putting theoretical flesh on the bone, the implications for deterrence will be a common feature. After considering the independent variables, predictive problems will be noted when applying expected utility theory; further, the dynamics of prospect theory will be elucidated. Finally, the dynamics of balance and consistency as

mediated by risk aversion will be considered in order to generate distinctive outcomes of cooperation or conflict at the systemic level.[12]

Balance and imbalance.

From a systems standpoint, non-additivity means that the relations between two states are often explained by the separate states' relations with a third state. Thus, we cannot determine the degree of cooperation and conflict between two states solely or even primarily by examining their bilateral relations. Two states might be adversaries, not because they have direct conflicts with one another, but because one is allied to a third state that is the enemy of the other. Two states might be allies because they share a common ally; they also might be allies because they share a common enemy despite the fact that they otherwise have little affinity for one another.[13] Realism counsels that the state pay close attention to the degree that its security interests are furthered or hindered by the actions of other states. Thus, states recognize that allies might possess undesirable characteristics from a domestic politics standpoint. Democracies find the internal

[12] Phenomena of interest can be treated as processes or as outcomes. But, they can also be treated as both for different purposes within the same theory. On this distinction, see Jack S. Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis, eds., Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 262.

[13] James A. Davis, "Structural Balance, Mechanical Solidarity, and Interpersonal Relations," American Journal of Sociology, vol. 68, no. 4 (January 1963), p. 445; George Caspar Homans, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1950), pp. 248-61.

politics of authoritarian states to be odious, but will ally with them when the external threat is great enough.[14]

Balance codifies the interconnections described above. Drawn from the Arab proverbs, the following relations obtain: the friend of my friend is my friend; the enemy of my friend is my enemy; and the enemy of my enemy is my friend. As a first cut, these dynamics generate rather gross predictions as to the likelihood of cooperation and conflict in a particular instance of interstate relations. The act of siding with one actor against another will likely bring the enmity of the isolated actor even if that is not one's intention. For a friend to become friendly with an enemy is likely to bring strain in the relationships all around. This inconsistent relationship will eventually tend toward balance as either the former enemy will become a friend or the former friend will become an enemy, thus designating the moving actor as the isolate in the latter case.[15] Of course, a state might prefer the strain of an imbalanced relation when compared with being the isolated minority facing a hostile pair of states,[16] but balance argues that this is likely to be a temporary situation as the other actors consult their own interests and react accordingly.[17]

---

[14] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., p. 122.
[15] Frank Harary, "A Structural Analysis of the Situation in the Middle East in 1956," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 5, no. 2 (1961), pp. 167-78.
[16] Philip Brickman and Charles Horn, "Balance Theory and Interpersonal Coping in Triads," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, vol. 26, no. 3 (1973), pp. 347-55.
[17] Brian Healy and Arthur Stein, "The Balance of Power in International History: Theory and Reality," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 17, no. 1 (March 1973), p. 57.

Systems are most likely to be balanced either when one issue is both predominant and divisive or when all of the relevant issues coalesce such that all states are separated into two different camps. In such cases there are no cross alignments. All of the states in one camp oppose all of the states in the other camp.[18] One consequence is that states with little in common other than the divisive issue at hand can be arrayed against states with which they have common interests.[19]

Systems have a tendency toward balance as states strive to further their interests, but reality and experience should allow us to make some judgments as to when the forces do not predominate. Balance is least likely when security threats are diffuse or when the degree of conflict within the system is not too acute.[20] If a reversal of alignments takes place, the rules of balance indicated above dictate that the losing state become hostile to both the other states. But this stand is costly to the state, particularly if the reversal is not permanent.[21] In fact, the actions of the state might generate unnecessary hostility and thus make the

---

[18] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Lauren, ed., op. cit., p. 228.
[19] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Lauren, ed., op. cit., p. 231.
[20] Employing directed graph theory, the degree of balance in a system has been developed by Harary et. al., but the results have been disappointing. According to Healy and Stein, "the ratio becomes especially significant when the two-way relationship between points is involved. In that case the graphs become quite complex and the degree of balance is far from obvious" (Healy and Stein, "The Balance of Power in International History," op. cit., p. 51); Harary, R. Z. Norman, and Dorwin Cartwright, Structural Models: An Introduction to the Theory of Directed Graphs (New York: John Wiley, 1956), p. 346.
[21] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Lauren, ed., op. cit., p. 230.

reversal permanent when a more solicitous understanding of the other might bring benefits.[22]

Imbalance can also occur because of propitious circumstances for one state. Due to the dynamics of anarchy in international relations outlined in the introduction, even status quo states can be tempted to make easy gains when others fail to defend their vital interests. Additionally, threats may be particularly acute throughout the system yet imbalance can result. Because of ideological antipathy states may fail to align with one another in a timely manner thus allowing an aggressive state to make outsized gains before it is stopped. Because systems have a tendency toward balance, this is not an expected configuration. Conversely, a decision-maker might decide that he can continue to be hostile toward two states and thus maintain an imbalanced system without the both adversaries coming together to oppose him. Domestic politics may be the proximate reason but irrational consistency is ultimately the causus causans when statesmen fail to take proper notice of the severity of the external threat and allow domestic interest groups to make policy that undermines the security of the state.[23] Moreover, as detailed below, irrational consistency can be analyzed

---

[22] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

[23] Schweller's theory of underbalancing follows Coser in arguing that the pre-crisis degree of group cohesion is the key to explaining whether a state will balance or fail to adequately balance against an external threat. Elite cohesion, elite consensus, government/regime vulnerability, and social cohesion comprise his explanatory variables. See, Randall L. Schweller, Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), Chapter 2; Lewis A. Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict (New

systemically. This is an advantage over previous theorizing regarding the conditions that give rise to imbalanced configurations. Unusual circumstances and idiosyncratic factors, such as personality to include proficiency and deficiency in statesmanship, heretofore have been relegated to residual explanations that are non-systemic in nature.

Rational consistency.

The belief that relationships have a tendency toward consistency provides a baseline of expectation against which to test reality. We essentially engage in 'reality-testing' in order to make better decisions.[24] Reason and experience provide us with informational benefits in excess of search costs when the consistency that we perceive reflects the consistency actually existing in the environment. On the one hand, sociologists have noted a preference for positivity in triadic relationships.[25] Experience and reason lead us to believe that our friends tend to like our other friends. This is particularly the case when we hold similar opinions on significant values that provide informational content regarding opinions on other important values.[26] On the other hand, we are also said to be rationally consistent when we become suspicious of the peaceful

---

York: Free Press, 1956), p. 98. However, crisis decision-making should diminish the impact of these factors in states able to engage in ratioanal consistency. See Ole R. Holsti's comments at fn. 52.

[24] Kenneth E. Boulding, "The Learning and Reality-Testing Process in the International System," in John C. Farrell and Asa P. Smith, eds., Image and Reality in World Politics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), pp. 1-15.

[25] Brickman and Horn, "Balance Theory and Interpersonal Coping in Triads," op. cit., pp. 347-55.

[26] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., pp. 126-27.

overtures by an adversary because we do not expect the latter to wish us well. Experience with previous deceptions and the intrinsic meaning of the idea of an enemy go a long way toward allowing us to read our environment correctly. The probability matching fallacy says that an event that occurs five out of six times should not lead us to bet against the occurrence of the event on the sixth try even if the event occurs as predicted in the first five instances. Thus, repeated attempts by an adversary that contravene our interests should not lead us to fall prey to a conciliatory move.[27] The adage that a tiger can't change his stripes largely applies here. In other instances, if we have to align with a less threatening actor in order to defeat a more immediate threat we do so with an understanding that this balanced configuration is likely to be temporary. In international relations, allies may harbor as many negative qualities as may the adversary of the moment, but we rationally understand that we need the former's assistance. When the external threat abates we can rationally be more selective with whom we choose to associate.

The concept of bounded rationality[28] has much in common with the concept of rational consistency. According to Keohane,

> "actors subject to bounded rationality cannot maximize their utilities, since they find it difficult to use available information to calculate the costs and benefits of every course of action. They therefore use shortcuts

---

[27] Nathan Kogan and Renato Tagiuri, "Interpersonal Preference and Cognitive Organization," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, no. 56, no. 1 (January 1958), pp. 113-16; Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., p. 125.

[28] Herbert A. Simon, Models of Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Models of Bounded Rationality (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982).

> such as rules of thumb in order to 'satisfice'—achieving a satisfactory level of performance rather than an optimal one. In the terms of Akerlof and Yellen,[29] they may be 'near rational.' That is, their deviations from rationality may not be so costly as to lead them to change their behavior."[30]

The rules of thumb that Keohane alludes to somewhat parallel the rationally consistent dynamics analyzed above, but not universally. Satisficing tends to work well enough in situations where repeated interactions provide informational feedback, the situation is relatively unchanging, and the stakes are not so high that an optimal decision is required. Limited value integration occurs because the values are frequently incommensurable and the aspirational level for each value is not particularly high.[31] Thus, satisficing tends to be appropriate for firms and large organizations engaged in typical bureaucratic decisions.[32]

The satisficing model breaks down when the information needed to make an important foreign policy decision that is unique is either absent or ambiguous. Keohane is correct to argue that near rational behavior at the unit level can produce significantly different outcomes at the systemic level than theories, such

---

[29] George A. Ackerlof and Janet Yellen, "Can small deviations from rationality make significant differences in economic equilibria?" American Economic Review, vol. 75, no. 4 (September 1985), pp. 708-20.
[30] Robert O. Keohane, "Realism, Neorealism, and the Study of World Politics," in Keohane, ed., Neorealism and its Critics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 12.
[31] John D. Steinbruner, The Cybernetic Theory of Decision (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 62.
[32] Richard Cyert and James G. March, A Behavioral Theory of the Firm (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963); Richard R. Nelson and Sydney G. Winter, An Evolutionary Theory of Economic Change (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

as Waltz's,[33] that employ maximizing rationality. He has correctly identified a major drawback of neorealist theories that analogize from classical microeconomics. Bounded rationality is a better approximation of reality that also does not sacrifice the possibility of systemic theory.[34] But Keohane contrasts bounded rationality with Morgenthau's thought experiment in which perfect rationality is used as a baseline against which misperceptions, perverse bargaining dynamics, and sheer irrationality are compared.[35] Perceptual satisficing bridges this conceptual divide without sacrificing the possibility of systemic theory. The deviations that produce significantly different outcomes at the systemic level can likely be a result of perceptual satisficing by decision-makers when the requisite information does not exist or is ambiguous. As discussed below, perceptual satisficing occurs when statesmen engage in shortcuts to cognition that will lead them astray when such shortcuts do not correctly analyze the stimuli in the environment.[36] By perceptually satisficing decision-makers fail to revisit their policies when it becomes obvious that they are failing to achieve their objectives. Examples abound in foreign policy in which failed policies are continued well after a 'near rational' analysis would

---

[33] Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (New York: Random House, 1979).
[34] Keohane, "Realism, Neorealism, and the Study of World Politics," in Keohane, ed., op. cit., pp. 12-13.
[35] Keohane, "Realism, Neorealism, and the Study of World Politics," in Keohane, ed., op. cit., p. 12; Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, (New York: Knopf, [1948], 1978), p. 5.
[36] Jervis, "Political Decision Making: Recent Contributions," Political Psychology, vol. 2, no. 2 (Summer 1980), p. 99.

dictate a change in course of action and at least one reason is that cognitive biases can be controlling.

Irrational consistency.

Irrational consistency can occur when cognitive, or unmotivated, biases predominate. These cognitive errors would be corrected were they pointed out to the decision-maker by a disinterested observer. Irrational consistency can also occur when affective, or motivated, biases are present. In such cases, the settled on policy calls up the values served rather than the other way around. Under irrational consistency, multiple sufficient causality is manifested for a chosen policy that would pass muster for any individual value adduced. This consistency is suspicious because there is little reason to believe that the values served by the policy are in any way positively related to each other. Interestingly, those who disfavor a policy tend to adduce values opposite to those that make up the suspicious consistency regarding the favored policy.[37] Thus, they display irrational consistency as well. This should not be surprising as March argued in his theory of bounded rationality that all decisions involve some prediction as to how their outcomes will make us feel. It is precisely this 'feeling of rationality'

[37] Early theorizing argues that this dynamic is cognitive in nature. More recent theorizing argues that affect plays a significant role. For a cognitive argument, see Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., pp. 128-42. For an affective argument, see Paul Slovic, "Trust, emotion, sex, politics, and science: Surveying the risk-assessment battlefield," Risk Analysis, vol. 19, no. 4 (1999), pp. 689-701.

that then can become the predicate for our preferences in the first instance.[38] Many examples of irrational consistency reflect a mixture of cognitive, and motivated, bias, respectively, but for theoretical clarity, they are disentangled. A number of preliminary comments regarding cognition and affect and their relationship are offered before specifically addressing the individual biases.

It might be argued that cognitive biases are not a manifestation of irrational consistency, but closer inspection reveals the utility of inclusion because one of the factors, the failure to perceive value trade-offs, can be a manifestation. Moreover, the factors producing cognitive bias tend to reinforce each other in an irrationally consistent manner. Cognitive biases are shortcuts that we use to make sense of our environment. As demonstrated above, the tendency to perceive balance serves us well when reality reflects our perceptions; thus, one could hardly call this cognitive bias debilitating for accurate decision-making. But cognitive biases reveal irrational consistency when the consistency that we perceive does not match the stimuli existing in the environment. The relevant biases for examination are: assimilating information to pre-existing images of the other without consciously understanding that this is taking place, which leads to overestimating the complexity of our thought processes, which leads to overconfidence in drawing conclusions regarding the intentions of others. This unwarranted confidence relieves us of engaging in hard thinking

---

[38] James G. March, "Bounded rationality, ambiguity, and the engineering of choice," Bell Journal of Economics, vol. 9, no. 2 (1978), pp. 587-608; McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., p. 698.

and, instead, allows us to engage in perceptual satisficing with the result that value integration in the form of trade-offs is neither perceived nor made. One effect of failing to make value trade-offs is to make too many enemies because we are unable to see how others perceive our own actions as they affect their interests.

Of these factors, the reluctance to perceive value trade-offs and the related, but not logical, belief that all good things go together, as detailed above, can also be the result of motivated bias. But, the difference between these two types of bias turns on the motivations for the reluctance to perceive trade-offs. At one extreme, cognitive bias is the root cause when the trade-offs are easy to avoid or the long-term consequences of the failure to engage in value integration are difficult to predict.[39] Moreover, cognitive biases are pervasive and generate perceptions based on what we expect to see as the consequence of prior beliefs.[40] Although complicated and contentiously debated, the dynamics of the run-up to the First World War reflect a syndrome of irrational biases that are largely cognitive in nature, in particular, the beliefs held by most of the major actors that the adversary would back down as in recent crises of the previous years and that, if war came, it would be over by Christmas even though the highest values were at stake.[41]

---

[39] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., p. 142.
[40] Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in Sears, Huddy, and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 268.
[41] On the first point, see, Schroeder, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Jervis, Wetzel, and Levy, eds., Systems,

In the case of ease of avoidance of making trade-offs, proper incentives can prolong deliberation in order to correct errors that arise from insufficient attention. But even so, incentives are no guarantee of success because effective learning requires accurate and immediate feedback regarding the relationship between the situation and the appropriate response. This necessary feedback is often missing because outcomes are often delayed and not necessarily attributable to a particular action; there is variability in the environment that degrades the reliability of the feedback, in particular when outcomes of low probability occur; there is often no information about what the outcome might have been had a different decision been made; and most important decisions are unique and thus provide little opportunity for learning.[42]

At the other extreme, motivated bias is the root cause when the trade-offs are particularly painful because the values are deeply held. Motivated biases generate perceptions due to felt needs, desires, and, most critically, interests. They are most likely to arise when highly consequential decisions are being made.[43] Moreover, as will be discussed later, anticipated feelings of regret at the

---

Stability, and Statecraft, op. cit., pp. 157-91. On the second and third points, see, Paul M. Kennedy, "The First World War and the International Power System," International Security, vol. 9, no. 1 (Summer 1984), pp. 7-40.

[42] Hillel J. Einhorn and Robin M. Hogarth, "Confidence in judgment: Persistence of the illusion of validity," Psychological Review, vol. 85, no. 5 (1978), pp. 395-416. Cited in Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Rational Choice and the Framing of Decisions," Journal of Business, vol. 59, no. 4, part 2: The Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory (October 1986), p. S274.

[43] Irving L. Janis and Leon Mann, Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment (New York: Free Press, 1977); Richard Ned Lebow, Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crises (Baltimore:

prospect of negative outcomes can systematically bias the decision-making calculus.[44] For example, the decision by the Bush administration to invade Iraq, likely, in some manner, to avenge the obscenity of the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. homeland, is an example of motivated bias. National Security Advisor Rice warned of the imminent threat of nuclear and chemical weapons emanating from Saddam Hussein's regime if the U.S. failed to take military action.[45] Yet it seems quite plausible that her comment, "…we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud"[46] was used as an excuse to cut short the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission's search in Iraq for nuclear and chemical weapons. Had the UNMVIC been allowed to complete an investigation that would have revealed the falsity of the weapons claims, international diplomacy would have obviated the policy option of militarily invading Iraq, which is precisely what the Bush administration wanted to avoid.

Motivated bias in the Iraq case is evidence of irrational consistency only when examining the specific illogic used in the failure to engage in value trade-offs in this instance. Had we seen administration officials make the case for a direct relation between the purported enormity of the stakes and the imagined difficulty of the task, the failure to engage in value trade-offs could still be a

---

Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in Sears, Huddy, and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 268.

[44] Keith Markman, Igor Gavanski, Stephen Sherman and Matthew McMullen, "The impact of perceived control on the imagination of better and worse possible worlds," Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, vol. 21, no. 6 (1995), pp. 588-95.

[45] "Top Bush officials push case against Saddam," CNN.com, September 8, 2002.

[46] "Top Bush officials push case against Saddam," CNN.com, September 8, 2002.

function of motivated bias, but without further implication. Or it might have been a rational response because invasion was considered the best option from a cost-benefit standpoint and the American people would then be called upon to engage in shared sacrifice in order to prevail. But instead, suspicious bolstering occurred. An advisor to the Bush Administration asserted that prevailing militarily in Iraq would be a "cakewalk."[47] Vice President Cheney asserted that the Iraqi people would welcome the American military as liberators.[48] Finally, President Bush prematurely declared 'mission accomplished' after the initial invasion and asked little of the American people other than to continue to go shopping in order to support the economy.[49]

Irrational consistency tends to manifest itself through cognitive bias when a decision-maker fails to search for alternatives after the chosen policy is seen to be failing. In the case of motivated bias, irrational consistency can reveal itself earlier through arguments used to justify a policy that contradict logical expectations. (Motivated bias need not necessarily lead to irrational consistency. Other inconsistencies mentioned earlier, such as the belief that imbalanced relationships can be maintained in the presence of two adversaries, can also be a function of motivated bias.) Between the polar opposites of cognitive bias and motivated bias lies the realm in which the actor perceives the need to integrate

---

[47] Kenneth L. Adelman, "Liberating Iraq would be a cakewalk," Washington Post, February 13, 2002.
[48] Cheney interview with Tim Russert, Meet the Press, March 16, 2003.
[49] Andrew J. Bacevich, "He told us to go shopping: Now the bill is due," Washington Post.com, October 5, 2006.

values and make trade-offs. All goals cannot be achieved; thus, in order to achieve certain highly valued goals, others need to be sacrificed or scaled back. In such instances, actors behave in a rationally consistent manner when the environment that they perceive requires such action in order to secure achievable valued goals.

These propositions parallel research into the non-linear dynamics of political crisis decision-making. Non-linearity means that all sorts of returns to scale can be found regarding actions.[50] The stress associated with making consequential political decisions is functional for the quality of the decision being made. According to Holsti, "some degree of stress is an integral and necessary precondition for individual or organizational problem solving, since in its absence there is no motivation to act. Even very low levels of stress may not be sufficient to alert one to the existence of a situation requiring attention, increasing vigilance, and stimulating preparations to cope with it."[51] Moderate stress levels structure the situation that the decision-maker is facing in order to mitigate the consideration of irrelevant values and to facilitate the integration of values deemed to be important. Moreover, the number of parties involved in the decision tend to narrow as the highest stakes in security affairs are considered and the organizational "politics of bargaining for resources, roles, missions, and

---

[50] Thierry Balzacq and Jervis, op. cit., p. 574.
[51] Ole R. Holsti, "Crisis Decision Making," in Philip E. Tetlock, Jo L. Husbands, Jervis, Paul C. Stern, and Charles Tilly, eds., Behavior, Society and Nuclear War, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 28.

compromise" give way to rationally consistent analysis.[52] Too high a level of stress challenges the optimistic aspects of decision under pressure and accentuates the negative aspects of reduced attention spans, cognitive rigidity, and compressed time horizons.[53] According to Levy, the high stakes decisions facing political decision-makers gives them "greater incentives to expend mental energy to make rational decisions and to learn from their mistakes, but those stakes also create higher levels of stress and (after a certain point) suboptimal performance."[54]

A neuroscience perspective supports these lines of argument, but also reveals that the relation between cognition and affect is more complex because it is governed by multiple emotion systems in the individual. Such systems have access to, and produce appraisals of, the sensory stream of incoming data even before an attempt is made to apply cognition. It is precisely these appraisals that initiate, and thus stimulate, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral activity.[55] The upshot is that cognition and emotion mutually support, and are necessary to, each other, respectively. According to Marcus, "emotion enhances our capacity to reason and indeed that to reason requires emotion not just to recruit its

---

[52] Holsti, "Crisis Decision Making," in Tetlock, Husbands, Jervis, Stern, and Tilly, eds., ibid., p. 17; Stephen D. Krasner, "Are bureaucracies important?" Foreign Policy, no. 7 (1972), pp. 159-79; Robert J. Art, "Bureaucratic politics and American foreign policy: A critique," Policy Sciences, no. 4 (1973), pp. 467-90.
[53] Holsti, "Crisis Decision Making," in Tetlock, Husbands, Jervis, Stern, and Tilly, eds., ibid., pp. 30-37.
[54] Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in Sears, Huddy, and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 258.
[55] George E. Marcus, "The Psychology of Emotion and Politics," in Sears, Huddy, and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 197.

abilities but also to execute its conclusions."[56] Emotional information usually adds both accuracy and efficiency in making judgments. But there are limits. Both extreme anger and fear can overwhelm more cognitively based responses and thus inhibit the decision-maker from making an objective analysis.[57] This dynamic between cognition and affect will later help us characterize ideal types regarding cooperation and conflict as the consequence of the interaction between consistency and loss aversion.

Cognitive (unmotivated) biases.

The streams of evidence presented to us are being assimilated to pre-existing images of the other and recent history quite unconsciously.[58] A formerly aggressive adversary will have a very difficult time in convincing us its overtures are peaceful and not a ruse. Conversely, democracies have a difficult time in

---

[56] Marcus, "The Psychology of Emotion and Politics," in Sears, Huddy, and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 206. The least that can be said of cognition and affect is that they are interdependently related. Scholarly disagreement exists as to the nature of the relationship. At one extreme, Zajonc argues that lower levels of cognition, such as reflexive actions, do not require affect as a catalyst. At the other extreme, Adolphs and Damasio argue that affect plays a disproportionate role in cognition. An intermediate version, useful for my purposes, is Mellers and her associates' decision-affect theory in which anticipated regret can bias decisional preferences in ways that cognitive biases cannot. See, Robert B. Zajonc, "Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences," American Psychologist, vol. 35, no. 2 (1984), pp. 151-75; Zajonc, "On the primacy of affect," American Psychologist, vol. 39, no. 2 (1984), pp. 117-23; Ralph Adolphs and Antonio R. Damasio, "The interaction of affect and cognition: A neurobiological approach," in Joseph P. Forgas, ed., Handbook of affect and social cognition (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates, 2001), pp. 27-49; Barbara A. Mellers, Alan Schwartz, Katty Ho, and Ilana Ritov, "Decision affect theory: Emotional reactions to the outcomes of risky options," Psychological Science, vol. 8, no. 6 (November 1997), pp. 423-29.

[57] McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., pp. 700-01.

[58] Zajonc, "Feeling and thinking," op. cit., pp. 151-75.

believing that its allies would go to war for anything other than defensive reasons. Recent cataclysmic war generates pre-existing images of the situation that may or may not be appropriate to the instance at hand. The conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars generated a fairly common understanding on both sides as to the fault and liability of France. Because France accepted responsibility, it was largely spared dismemberment even if it was not particularly trusted.[59] States generally feared that revolution led to war and the malleable and contrasting doctrines of intervention and non-intervention in the affairs of other states reflected this concern. Even if the methods to achieving security were contested by states differently affected by domestic unrest in neighboring states, the pre-existing beliefs of the causes of war and revolution largely stabilized mutual expectations of interstate behavior and led to uncommon cooperation during the Concert of Europe. In contrast, the somewhat widespread revised belief that Germany was not entirely responsible for causing the First World War and that the conflict was both unwanted and generated by systemic dynamics (particularly those of military technology and alliances)[60] led the British to underestimate the forces driving the Nazis to violently overturn the status quo. Finally, the Nazi experience may have predisposed the United States to see the Soviet Union as being cut from the same aggressive mold, thus generating much

---

[59] Richard Rosecrance and Chih-Cheng Lo, "Balancing, Stability, and War: The Mysterious Case of the Napoleonic International System," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 40, no. 4 (December 1996), pp. 479-500.
[60] Sidney B. Fay, The Origins of the World War, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1928), p. 547.

unforeseen and unnecessary hostility that produced the Cold War.[61] Unfortunately, the ruthless and paranoid Stalin abetted this pre-existing image. Gaddis speculates that the Cold War might have been avoided had Stalin not come to power.[62]

Unconsciously assimilating bits of new information to pre-existing images ultimately results in unwarranted confidence in our opinions because we overestimate the complexity of our thought processes at the same time that we fail to realize that we are simplifying. Streams of new information are not evaluated in isolation, but are either incorporated or reformulated to conform to what we expect to see. This 'selective attention' to information largely accounts for the persistence of our beliefs.[63] The political commentator David Brooks captures this conceit quite nicely: "Humans are overconfident creatures. Ninety-four percent of college professors believe they are above average and 90 percent of drivers believe they are above average behind the wheel. Researchers J.H. Shoemaker and J. Edward Russo gave computer executives quizzes on their industry. Afterward, the executives estimated that they had gotten 5 percent of the answers wrong. In fact, they had gotten 80 percent of the answers wrong."[64]

---

[61] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," International Security, vol. 7, no. 3 (Winter 1982-83), pp. 20-22.
[62] John Lewis Gaddis, We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 293.
[63] Alexander L. George, Presidential decisionmaking in foreign policy: The effective use of information and advice (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980).
[64] David Brooks, "The Fatal Conceit," in New York Times, October 26, 2009.

The upshot of this misplaced confidence is that we might not know what the other is thinking, but we likely know what we are thinking. We impose our understanding of the situation and presume that the other is thinking in this manner. For instance, presumption of the manner in which an adversary employs new military technology is likely to reflect the manner in which we would employ it. This is not necessarily irrational; physical limitations on the capabilities of the technology are a brute fact. A short-range missile cannot be launched inter-continentally. But the manner in which the technology is employed by the adversary in its tactical and operational doctrine may be quite unanticipated, surprising, and beyond our ken because we are confident that we know how it will be employed by a comparison with our own military doctrine.[65] Two examples readily come to mind. The German blitzkrieg during the Second World War was a doctrinal innovation rather than one of technology. According to Jack Snyder, French military commanders failed to adequately deploy their forces in a period of mobile armored warfare.[66] In another important case, Stein argues that the Arab use of densely deployed anti-aircraft missiles to

---

[65] Tversky and Kahneman, "Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases," Science, vol. 185, no. 4157 (27 September 1974), pp. 1124-31; Tversky and Kahneman, "Availability: A Heuristic for Judging Frequency and Probability," Cognitive Psychology, vol. 5, no. 1 (1973), pp. 207-32.

[66] Jack L. Snyder, "Perceptions of the Security Dilemma in 1914," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 159-60.

defeat the Israeli Air Force during the 1973 October War instead of improving its air force is another example of such innovation.[67]

Perceptual satisficing occurs when a policy that seems satisfactory is settled upon. Little effort is made to search for alternative policies that would produce more optimal results and incoming streams of disconfirming information are either disregarded or reformulated as evidence that the settled on policy is working. Premature cognitive closure can occur. British Foreign Secretary Grey did not make clear that his country would stand by France and not remain neutral if it was involved in a war with Germany, but the German leadership convinced itself of British neutrality and made little effort to confirm whether this was true or not.[68] Thus, at the outbreak of fighting, Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's lament that, "the war turns into an unlimited world catastrophe only through England's participation,"[69] may have reflected sincere surprise that was the result of severe cognitive bias. From the standpoint of the Entente powers, Schroeder argues that intermittent signals of moderation in

---

[67] Janice Gross Stein, "Calculation, Miscalculation, and Conventional Deterrence I: The View from Cairo," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., pp. 41-49.

[68] There is considerable debate on these propositions, which I employ here for exposition and are a composite of viewpoints. The cognitive closure argument is made by Lebow, Between Peace and War, op. cit., pp. 119-74. In rebuttal, Lynn-Jones argues that the Germans had a reasonable expectation that Britain would remain neutral, as did the other major participants. See, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Détente and Deterrence: Anglo-German Relations, 1911-1914," in Steven E. Miller, Lynn-Jones, and Stephen Van Evera, Military Strategy and the Origins of the First World War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 165-94.

[69] Cited in Konrad H. Jarausch, "The Illusion of Limited War: Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg's Calculated Risk, July 1914," in Central European History, vol. 2, no. 1 (March 1969), p. 72.

bellicose behavior by Germany served only to reinforce the notion that the alignments were working and thus needed to be maintained which only served to increase German frustration with its geopolitical predicament.[70]

Perceptual satisficing also results in a failure to engage in value trade-offs. The primary value is seized upon and other values are brought into line with that value. Two heuristic principles are usually invoked to reduce the complexity of assessing probabilities and therefore to settle on the primary value of interest. First, states tend to overestimate, on the basis of psychological salience, the probability that a vivid event, likely experienced first-hand, will recur. Second, there is a tendency to attach excessive representativeness to small samples of behavior that may be quite rare.[71] Without realizing it, states usually fail to integrate values when they decide on the basis of a single value dimension.[72] Thus, if war avoidance is the primary value, the costs of concessions to the other state might be mitigated. Conversely, if deterrence of aggression is the primary value, the costs of generating unnecessary hostility might be minimized. Either resulting policy might be acceptable if the appropriate risk is

---

[70] Schroeder, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Jervis, Wetzel, and Levy, eds., Systems, Stability, and Statecraft, op. cit., pp. 177-78.
[71] Summarized by Jack Hirschleifer, "The Expanding Domain of Economics," American Economic Review, vol. 75, no. 6, (December 1985), p. 60. Also, see, Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Tversky, eds., Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, ibid., pp. 22-24.
[72] Jervis, "Rational Deterrence: Theory and Evidence," World Politics, vol. 41, no. 2 (January 1989), p. 196.

being defended against. Concessions to an insecure state may relieve its anxiety while threats to an aggressive state might disabuse the latter of the state's determination to protect its interests. But the policy will suffer if the circumstances change and the state fails to adapt.[73] In certain cases, when a tentative decision is being reached, overconfidence can bias a decision-maker to dismiss out of hand opposing views of the situation, in particular, those of foreign diplomats who might hold a keener appreciation of the situation.[74]

In the worst case the lesser risk may be seized upon. The state might either overestimate or underestimate a deterrent posture that the other state believes is sufficient to make clear its determination to defend its interests. When overestimation occurs, the state is essentially self-deterred and may concede a bargaining advantage quite out of proportion to the other state's representations.[75] If the other state is aggressive, the state's self-deterrence will dovetail nicely and even encourage the other state's aggressive behavior. Prior to a war council meeting with the Kaiser in 1912, Bethmann-Hollweg viewed the emerging, but limited, détente with Britain as a means to avoiding war. Afterward, he became convinced that war was likely and pinned his hopes on Britain staying neutral in a continental war involving Germany because of the

---

[73] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," op. cit., pp. 22-24.
[74] Holsti, "Crisis Decision Making," in Tetlock, Husbands, Jervis, Stern, and Tilly, eds., op. cit., p. 38.
[75] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," op. cit., pp. 14-19.

détente.[76] Unfortunately, Grey continued to see the détente as evidence that Germany would continue to restrain itself and its junior ally, Austria.[77] The British Foreign Secretary seemed oblivious to evidence that the situation had changed regarding German intentions and that the wrong risk was being defended against.

Underestimation occurs when the state convinces itself that it is safe to trifle with the other state's interests that a disinterested observer believes are most certain to be defended. Underestimation is a particularly acute problem when the hostility of the other is overestimated, but the other's deterrent posture is seen as vulnerable to preemption. In such cases, crisis instability results when deterrent forces become targets of attack.[78] Crisis dynamics are driven even harder when the state believes that war is likely and it is better to strike first than to receive the first blow.[79]

A consequence of the failure to make value trade-offs can be to make too many enemies because no values and interests are sacrificed. Termed the

---

[76] Fritz Fischer, War of Illusions: German Policies from 1911 to 1914, trans. Marian Jackson (London: Chatto and Windus, 1975), pp. 160-69; Germany's Aims in the First World War (New York: Norton, 1967); Imanuel Geiss, ed., July 1914: The Outbreak of the First World War: Selected Documents (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967); David E. Kaiser, "Germany and the Origins of the First World War," Journal of Modern History, vol. 55, no. 3 (September 1983), pp. 463-64, 68.

[77] Lynn-Jones, "Détente and Deterrence: Anglo-German Relations, 1911-1914," in Miller, Lynn-Jones, and Van Evera, op. cit., pp. 182-84.

[78] Richard K. Betts, "Conventional Deterrence: Predictive Uncertainty and Policy Confidence," World Politics, vol. 37, no. 2 (January 1985), pp. 175-76.

[79] Holsti, "Crisis Decision Making," in Tetlock, Husbands, Jervis, Stern, and Tilly, eds., op. cit., pp. 49-50.

fundamental attribution error, there is a tendency for a state to believe that its actions are justified because it is reacting to situational factors, but to assume the actions of the other as being dispositionally motivated.[80] (The other side of the coin is that concessions by the state are seen to be dispositional. That is, the concessions by the state are freely given. In contrast, concessions by the other state are seen to be situationally driven. That is, the other state has no choice but to comply with the state's demand.)[81] The state fails to see that the realization of its interests might just threaten the interests of others. This can occur when the long-term effects of a policy are hard to predict. But it can also occur when the state is relieved from making difficult choices.[82] For instance, states blessed with free security through geographic providence (e.g., Britain regarding the English Channel, the United States regarding its protective oceans on both sides) believe that they are strong enough to avoid these value trade-offs.[83] Preponderantly large states such as Wilhelmine Germany can believe that bullying will not lead others to coalesce against them. (In contrast, smaller states may be forced to make value trade-offs because they recognize that they cannot afford to make too

---

[80] Richard E. Nisbett and Lee Ross, Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings in Social Judgment (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980).
[81] Dale C. Copeland, "Do Reputations Matter?" Security Studies, vol. 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1997), pp. 61-66.
[82] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., p. 141.
[83] Arnold Wolfers, Discord and Collaboration (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), pp. 233-51; Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., p. 136.

many enemies.)[84] Risk is manipulated to force others to get out of one's way if mutual ruin is not to be the result. Schelling refers to this dynamic as forcing upon the other the last clear chance to avoid disaster.[85]

Motivated (affective) biases.

Opinions that an actor holds are not always the consequence of reality-testing clouded by the cognitive biases discussed above.[86] Affective biases may be at work when the actions that another takes serve important interests usually resulting from domestic politics.[87] According to Levy, "motivated biases are most likely to manifest themselves in decisions involving high stakes and consequential actions that might affect important values or tradeoffs having important values, and the resulting stress from threats to basic values often leads decision-makers to deny those threats or the need to make tradeoffs between values."[88] If cognitive biases generate perceptions of what we expect to see, affective biases can be related to reactions toward what we do not expect to see.

---

[84] Thus, small states adapt their domestic circumstances to internationally driven pressures while large, great, powers are more prone to tailoring their foreign strategies to domestic considerations. On these points, see Peter J. Katzenstein, Small States in World Markets (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); Jack Snyder, Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), pp. 317-18.

[85] Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 70, 90 et passim.

[86] M. Brewster Smith, Jerome S. Bruner, and Robert W. White, Opinions and Personality (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1956), pp. 1-6.

[87] Lebow, Between Peace and War, op. cit.; Lebow and Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," Journal of Social Issues, vol. 43, no. 4 (1988), pp. 5-72.

[88] Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in Sears, Huddy, and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 264; Ole R. Holsti and Alexander L. George, "The effects of stress on the performance of foreign policy-makers," in C.P. Cottam, ed., Political Science Annual (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975), pp. 255-319.

This latter dynamic predisposes actors to factor anticipated regret into the decision making calculus. Unanticipated outcomes can produce reactions that do not scale in effect. Surprises can feel more pleasant (if they are positive) or more painful (if they are more negative) than expected outcomes.[89] Experimental evidence suggests that decision-makers are more likely to regret bad outcomes if they are in control of the situation.[90] Decision-makers additionally regret bad outcomes if they are the result of action rather than inaction.[91] But surprisingly, decision-makers experience greater regret if the bad outcomes are the result of inaction rather than action.[92] Thus, a bias is in favor of action rather than inaction even though we cannot predict the content.

Because the dynamics that operate in another state are frequently opaque to us, we can be faced with a situation in which the necessary evidence is missing rather than ambiguous, the latter of which is the case when cognitive biases predominate. If we presume that the other was ignorant regarding the effects of its actions on others, we might try to educate it by signaling a stronger deterrent stand to protect our interests. But this stronger deterrent stand may well backfire

---

[89] Mellers, Schwartz, Ho, and Ritov, "Decision affect theory: Emotional reactions to the outcomes of risky options," op. cit., pp. 423-29; McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., p. 699.

[90] Markman, Gavanski, Sherman and McMullen, "The impact of perceived control on the imagination of better and worse possible worlds," op. cit., pp. 588-95.

[91] Ilana Ritov and Jonathan Baron, "Reluctance to vaccinate: Omission bias and ambiguity," Journal of Behavioral Decision Making, vol. 3, no. 4 (1990), pp. 263-77.

[92] Jeffrey Inman and Marcel Zeelenberg, "Would I rather fight than switch? Consumer regret following switch versus repeat decisions in outcome sequences," unpublished manuscript.

and promote aggression because the other has motivated biases to act in the proscribed manner.

Underestimation and overestimation of a deterrent threat can be the result of affective biases rather than the consequence of cognitive biases. In such cases, perceptions are the result of policies rather than being the cause of policies.[93] Again, irrational consistency results but the taproot is different. A good example of underestimation is a case in which a state decides that it wants to develop a relationship with another state by becoming hostile to the latter state's adversary. The adversary will be understandably mystified because it believes that it has done nothing to provoke the state. Moreover, the state's challenge of the adversary's deterrent stance that is believed to be credible will further compound the misperception if it is not understood that third party dynamics are the crux of the issue. From the standpoint of the state, cognitive dissonance occurs when it rationalizes its actions by developing an intrinsic reason for opposing the newfound adversary when it becomes obvious that little external evidence exists for the stance.[94]

---

[93] Jervis, "Political Decision Making," op. cit., p. 91; Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

[94] Hirschleifer, "The Expanding Domain of Economics," op. cit., p. 80; George A. Ackerlof and William T. Dickens, "The Economic Consequences of Cognitive Dissonance," American Economic Review, vol. 72, no. 3 (June 1982), pp. 307-19. 'Blowback' is a manifestation of this dynamic when political actors come to believe the myths that they develop in order to rationalize their aggression. See, Snyder, Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition, op. cit., pp. 39-49.

Overestimation of a deterrent threat can occur for affective reasons when a state threatens to leave an alliance by charging that the alliance is failing to defend its interests, which can then be better served by allying with the enemy. Affective biases will not be needed here provided that the state correctly focuses on the greater threat to its security, but such biases can be causal when the state wants to renege on its fair share of the alliance burden. There is a rational basis to free-riding, but only if the collective good is actually provided.[95] Stalin's neutrality pact with Hitler is perhaps a good example of affective biases at work, but the explanation is more complicated than the thumb-nail sketch presented for expository purposes.[96] Stalin rationally did not want Britain and France to maneuver him into fighting Hitler alone. Britain and France had similar concerns about being left alone on the battlefield against Germany.[97] These concerns are to be expected of status quo states. But Aspaturion argues that, while Britain and

---

[95] Both the Prisoner's Dilemma and work on collective goods theory demonstrate that what is individually optimal can be collectively suboptimal, but learning should eventually take place after persisting in a failing policy. Glenn Snyder addresses this learning point at fn. 217.

[96] Posen's characterization combines every possible motive as a reason for Stalin's action, thus making it near impossible to analyze in a single theoretical framework: "Moscow may have been aiming at an alliance; or at appeasement, as were France and Britain, or at keeping its options open against the possibility of French and British accommodation with Hitler; or at scaring the Western allies into making a greater effort to tighten their connection with the Soviet Union" (Barry R. Posen, "Review Article: Competing Images of the Soviet Union," World Politics, vol. 39, no. 4 (July, 1987), p. 596).

[97] Wolfers shows that the relations between France and Britain regarding the German threat were as contentious as were their separate relations with the Soviet Union. See, Wolfers, Britain and France Between Two Wars: Conflicting Strategies of Peace Since Versailles (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1940). Thus, it can be argued that all three states suffered from affective biases to greater or lesser degrees.

France were genuinely status quo states, the Soviet Union always tended to be provisionally status quo: "The Soviet Union was revisionist when Germany was weak, a defender of the status quo after Hitler came to power, and revisionist again in 1939 when it seized the opportunity to gain territory and remain neutral in a war between its foes."[98]

Opportunism in this instance served the state very poorly as Germany consequently attacked the Soviet Union.[99] While Britain and France were understandably uncertain about Nazi intentions during the early days of 1934 and the evidence pointed as much in favor of conciliation as in favor of deterrence, statesmen steeped in a realist tradition had no intentions of going over to Hitler's side. Of Hitler, Lord Halifax wrote, "One had a feeling all the time that we had a totally different sense of values and were speaking in a different language." [100] In contrast, significant affective bias prevented Stalin from understanding that Hitler was not a man with who one might associate in order to make gains.

When a state acts out of desperation defensive avoidance intensifies the failure to avoid value trade-offs and largely occurs when deeply held values

---

[98] Vernon V. Aspaturion's formulations detailed in Herbert S. Dinerstein, "The Transformation of Alliance Systems," American Political Science Review, vol. 59, no. 3 (September 1965), p. 593.
[99] Jiri Hochman, The Soviet Union and the Failure of Collective Security (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).
[100] Cited in Lewis Namier, In the Nazi Era (London: Macmillan, 1952), p. 163.

cannot be sacrificed.[101] A state that fights a war in which it has little chance of winning is not necessarily problematic from a perceptual standpoint. If fighting and losing a war can stem a state's further decline, the aggression can be quite rational.[102] But defensive avoidance occurs when a state underestimates and distorts the costs of challenging the status quo. Such a state is not able to see that it will be defeated by its adversaries if it persists in challenging the status quo because it is preoccupied with the costs it will pay if it does not challenge the status quo.[103] Wishful thinking occurs as decision-makers see their desired policies as more likely to succeed at the same time that they convince themselves that failure is improbable. This is more likely the case when such decision-makers seduce themselves with an illusion that they are in control of the unfolding events.[104]

Technological and organizational dynamics as they relate to affective biases. Scholarly understanding of the security dilemma and refinement of the implications of military technology and organizational dynamics can reveal why

---

[101] Charles D. Kaufman, "Out of the lab and into the archives: A method for testing psychological explanations of political decision making," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 38, no. 4 (1994), pp. 557-86.

[102] Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman wrongly deny this possibility as they argue that diplomacy and possible capitulation are less costly to the state than war if defeat is the outcome. See, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, The War Trap (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 66-67; Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 47-52.

[103] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," op. cit., pp. 29-30; Irving Janis and Leon Mann, Decision Making (New York: Free Press, 1977).

[104] E.J. Langer, "The Illusion of Control," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, no. 32, no. 2 (1975), pp. 311-28.

a desperate state engages in motivated biases to fight a war that it will ultimately lose. Due to anarchy, the security dilemma operates when the actions that a state takes to protect itself threaten the security of others even though the former may have no intention to do others harm. Measures can be taken to ameliorate, but not to eradicate, the situation short of world government; thus the dilemma is very real in international relations. Military technology can abate or exacerbate the security dilemma. Specifically, when the defense is both stronger than the offense and the defense can be distinguished from the offense, the security dilemma should not be acute. The reverse occurs when the offense is both stronger than the defense and the offense and the defense cannot be distinguished from one another. In such a case, even status quo states are required to act like aggressors in order to protect themselves.[105] More recent considerations of the offense/defense balance conclude that the defense is almost always stronger than the offense from technical and geographical standpoints.[106] Yet, organizational dynamics have been given short shrift with respect to surprise attack in this argument. A priori, the defense is more powerful than the offense. The problem is that, a posteriori, history demonstrates that states and their military organizations rarely take the timely action needed to make the stronger defense work as theorized. The initial phases of a surprise attack often

---

[105] Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," World Politics, vol. 30, no. 2 (January 1978), pp. 164-214.
[106] Snyder, "Perceptions of the Security Dilemma in 1914," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., op. cit., Chapter 7; John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," International Security, vol. 7, no. 1 (1982), pp. 3-39.

favor the offender even if the defense eventually prevails.[107] Status quo states believe that they have successfully made clear to aggressors that they will defend their interests. Thus, they are genuinely surprised when attacked by a desperate state.

Desperate states engage in aggression, in part, because of motivated biases. But they also do so, in part, because, historically, surprise attack works. Thus, they rely on either self-deterrence by the attacked state (it will allow the aggression to stand), or an unwillingness by the attacked state to fight a total war to regain its lost possessions.[108] A refined understanding of the dynamics of military technology and organizational dynamics as they relate to the security dilemma gives a desperate state a rational sliver of incentive to believe that its enterprise will work.

The best example of defensive avoidance is Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, which was the result of desperation. But even here, the case is not so clear-cut. According to Betts, "the status quo, or what seemed to flow from it, appeared intolerable (or less tolerable than a gamble on war); war at some point in the future, with declining prospects for victory, seemed inevitable (or almost inevitable); and there appeared to be no satisfactory diplomatic or other

---

[107] Betts, "Conventional Deterrence," op. cit., pp. 153-79; Samuel P. Huntington, "Conventional Deterrence and Conventional Retaliation in Europe," International Security, vol. 8, no. 3 (Winter 1983-84), pp. 32-56.
[108] Betts, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Graham T. Allison, Albert Carnesale, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., Hawks, Doves, and Owls: An Agenda for Avoiding Nuclear War (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1985), p. 67.

alternative to change the situation (or none more palatable than war)."[109] Japan was loath to give up its colonial possessions in the Far East as they threatened British interests there. American leaders were obtuse to the Japanese economic predicament.[110] At the same time that they were arguing to their Japanese counterparts that defensive support for Britain did not imply prejudice towards Japanese interests,[111] the Americans refused to allow Britain to concilliate Japan.[112] The American oil embargo left Japan with the unenviable choice between retrenching and launching a preventive war on British interests in the Dutch East Indies and on American interests in Hawaii.[113] The surprise attack on Pearl Harbor succeeded in the short run, but failed in its long run purposes. American leaders were taken by surprise precisely because they knew that Japan could not survive a long total war. Therefore, they discounted the possibility of the surprise attack.[114] In turn, Japanese leaders hoped that the United States would be self-deterred by such a brazen act or that they would only fight a

---

[109] Betts, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Allison, Carnesale, and Nye, eds., op. cit., p. 61.
[110] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 28.
[111] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., p. 40; Nobutaka Ike, ed., Japan's Decision for War (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 43.
[112] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Lauren, ed., op. cit., p. 221.
[113] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 26.
[114] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 26.

limited war in which the Japanese might be able to prevail.[115] Strong American public opinion that it would oppose Japanese imperialism failed to disabuse the Japanese leadership of its contemplated aggression because the latter had motivated biases to believe that the impossible could somehow succeed. Because the Japanese preferred war to retrenchment, they could not be deterred. Because the Japanese could not be deterred, making cooperation more attractive to them by the United States was the only way to solve the predicament,[116] but the Americans made no attempt to do so because they believed that dispositional, rather than situational, dynamics, respectively, were at play.

This account of the opening of the war in the Pacific is accurate as far as it goes. Nevertheless, as detailed above, the U.S. and Britain were not of the same mind. Although the Americans carried the day, the potential for imbalance inhered in the differential attitudes toward Japan. Even more importantly, Japan could perhaps be forgiven for believing that American policy was not of one mind. Three decades earlier, Teddy Roosevelt secretly championed the Japanese position in the settlement of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. Although the American congress was not predisposed to allowing Japanese expansion in Southeast Asia, President Roosevelt enthusiastically viewed Japanese paramountcy on the Korean peninsula much as he did American predominance in Latin America by means of the Monroe Doctrine. Moreover, he secretly cabled

---

[115] Scott D. Sagan, "The Origins of the Pacific War," Journal of Disciplinary History, vol. 18, no. 4 (1988), pp. 893-922.
[116] Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," op. cit., p. 179.

Tokyo that the U.S. and Britain approved of the annexation of Korea, an unconstitutional act. Finally, Admiral Yamamoto had vivid cognitive images of the successful surprise attack by the Japanese on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur in Manchuria and used this as the basis for planning the attack on Pearl Harbor.[117]

Defensive avoidance is a severe form of affective bias. Both the dynamics of underestimation and overestimation, respectively, of deterrent threats can have affective components as well. Under both defensive avoidance and underestimation, states come to believe that their aggressive actions will not be contested. Overestimation results in self-deterrence and leads the state to believe that concessions to the other state will not lead the latter to press its advantage. Overestimation of the threat results in failing to take an adequate deterrent stand and hoping to get off scot-free.[118]

---

[117] James Bradley, "Diplomacy that will live in infamy," New York Times, December 6, 2009.

[118] One is tempted to argue that this is a manifestation of buck-passing. But buck-passing is predicated on the idea that threatened states are sufficiently defensively secure. Thus, assisting an ally is unnecessary. On these points, see, Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," International Organization, vol. 44, no. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 138-68. Overestimation of a deterrent threat makes no such presumption. In fact, overestimation combined with defensive avoidance mirrors the sociological dynamic in which a group despairs of a solution to an external threat and therefore disintegrates. For this argument, see, Charles E. Fritz, in Robert K. Merton and Robert A. Nisbet, eds., Contemporary Social Problems: An Introduction to the Sociology of Deviant Behavior and Social Disorganization (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961); Fritz and Harry B. Williams, "The human being in disaster: a research perspective," Annals 309, no. 1 (January 1957), pp. 42-51; Arthur A. Stein, "Conflict and Cohesion: A Review of

One caveat needs to be made here. As indicated previously, all of these affective biases tend to result from domestic level politics. One reason why the British did not do a better job of deterring Germany prior to the First World War is that Grey feared that the government would fall over this stand. When states are deeply conflicted they may end up with policy paralysis. Deficient statesmanship can be at work. Moreover, the sense of threat necessary for a polity to focus on the predominant threat may not be realized until disaster is at the doorstep. But it is not unreasonable for a state to appease another state that it knows it is in no position to presently oppose. Appeasement, in the older, more diplomatic, sense of the term, can be appropriate if it buys the state time. Allies can be found, domestic support generated, and perhaps circumstances can change that will allow the state to eventually prevail against an aggressive adversary. The problem defines the imperative to take appropriate action and, when such action is not taken, irrational consistency manifests itself. The British were faced with this problem prior to the Second World War. But neither the British, nor the French for that matter, did little to rectify the military imbalance with Nazi Germany and were no more ready to prosecute war in 1939 than they were in 1934 when the Nazi threat began to manifest itself.[119]

---

the Literature," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 20, no. 1 (March 1976), pp. 143-72.

[119] George A. Lanyi, "The Problem of Appeasement," World Politics, vol. 15, no. 2 (January 1963), pp. 316-28; Samuel P. Huntington, "Arms Races: Prerequisites and Results," in Carl J. Friedrich and Seymour E. Harris, eds., Public Policy: A Yearbook of the Graduate School of Public Administration, Harvard University (Brattleboro, VT: Vermont Printing Co., 1958), p. 54.

Unintended consequences can occur when states underestimate another state's deterrent profile. In turn, the deterring state may not be able to predict its own response.[120] The basis of the response is likely to be affective driven as anticipated regret biases the response in favor of action rather than inaction. For instance, neither the Soviets nor the Americans expected that a three-fold increase in American defense spending would result from a Korean 'war of liberation' in an area which the Americans previously abjured an interest in defending.[121] But decision-affect theory sheds light on why an active outcome of this sort should not have been unexpected.

Relating balance and consistency through risk assessment and its relationship to deterrence.

So far, the dynamics of balance and consistency have largely been analyzed in isolation of one another. But a mediated stimulus response method of analysis is appropriate and this is where both dynamics either reinforce or mitigate each other to generate non-obvious outcomes of cooperation or conflict. When another state takes an action that affects our interests, it usually behooves us to ask what is intended by the action. Then, a response is taken, which, in turn, is reacted to

---

[120] More generally, people are notoriously poor predictors of their feelings in the future and repetition or experience does not improve performance. On these points, see George Loewenstein and David Schkade, "Wouldn't it be nice? Predicting future feelings," in Kahneman, Ed Diener, and Norbert Schwartz, eds., Well being: The foundations of hedonic psychology (New York: Russell Sage, 1999), pp. 85-105.

[121] Gaddis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 109-15.

by the originally moving state.[122] In effect, we act as 'naïve scientists'. Following the work of Nisbett and Ross, Larson argues that, "the naïve scientist must describe accurately an individual datum (an object or event), characterize a sample of data, generalize to the population of objects or events, assess the magnitude of covariation between events, formulate causal explanations, predict future events, and test theories."[123] Because we are enmeshed in a system, we are potentially able to realize that both situational and dispositional factors must be separated from each other and recombined to make a considered judgment concerning another's actions.[124] But reasoning systemically is another area in which non-linearity makes itself evident and is surprising because most actors

---

[122] Jevis, "Introduction: Approach and Assumptions," in Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 2. According to Glenn Snyder, for simplicity sake, the inference process then stops as deterrence has either succeeded or failed even as he recognizes that deterrence can continue to function during armed conflict. See, Glenn H. Snyder, "Deterrence and Power," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 4, no. 2 (June 1960), p. 168. Indeed, the concept of limited nuclear war is predicated on the continuing possibility of deterrence and restraint if it is not to spread to, and therefore become indistinguishable from, general nuclear war. See, Glenn Snyder, Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1961), pp. 73-74. For skepticism that limited nuclear war can stay limited, see, Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," ibid., pp. 206-10; Jervis, The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 95-98.

[123] Deborah Welch Larson, Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 36; Nisbett and Ross, Human Inference, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

[124] M. Brewster Smith, "Political Attitudes," in Jeanne N. Knutson, ed., Handbook of Political Psychology (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher, 1973), pp. 57-82; Kurt Lewin, Field Theory in Social Sciences (New York: Harper, 1951).

tend to think in linear fashion.[125] Using a rough version of expected utility theory we judge another's action based on the benefits that we presume it intended to achieve for itself and balance those expected benefits against the costs and risks of the actions with appropriate probabilities attached.[126] What is key here under rational choice is that the carriers of value are states of wealth or assets, rather than just discrete changes in wealth or assets, the latter of which severely limits the effect of the diminishing marginal utility of any acquired asset.[127]

Actions (also conceptualized as policies) are believed to generate advantages as well as disadvantages. It is natural to presume that an actor takes an action in which the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Else, why take the action unless the actor is a deviant? Indeed, we presume that the more the perceived disadvantages result from the policy, the presumable advantage will take on greater importance to the actor.[128] In the case in which only disadvantages result from the policy, as judged by a disinterested observer, we

---

[125] Jerome Bruner, Jacqueline Goodnow, and George Austin, A Study of Thinking (New York: Wiley, 1956). Cited in Jervis, "Systems and Interaction Effects," in Snyder and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 25.

[126] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 15; Edward E. Jones and Keith E. Davis, "From Acts to Dispositions: The Attribution Process in Person Perception," in Leonard Berkowitz, ed., Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, vol. 2 (New York: Academic Press, 1965), pp. 227-28.

[127] Thus, we can understand why a poor man values a dollar much more than a rich one and by extension, why a poor state will take riskier actions to acquire a good than will a wealthy state even as we oppose it. See, Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," Econometrica, vol. 47, no. 2 (March 1979), p. 277; Tversky and Kahneman, "Rational choice and the framing of decisions," op. cit., p. S259.

[128] M. Brewster Smith, "Attitude Change," in D. Sills, ed., International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 463.

might consider that the actor was either unaware or ignorant of the effects of his actions.[129] Such an actor does not necessarily deserve censure, but it might need to be educated as to the consequences of its actions on others as well as to itself.[130]

When we judge that the actor likely knew of and approved of the advantages and recognized the disadvantages associated with his actions, proportionality seems to guide our judgment, which is a fairly linear manner of thinking. Large projected gains ought to be proportional to the risks and costs involved even if we attempt to thwart them when they go against our interests. But when the gains are not commensurate with the risks we become alarmed at the other's future intentions. A state that risks a lot in order to achieve a small gain is generally perceived likely to be nastier and less deterrable when it becomes stronger.[131] Thus, it is best to strongly oppose the state in the infancy of its aggressive career in order to demonstrate that the rights and interests of others need a measure of respect rather than to indulge it. States that probe another state's deterrent strategy in order to make gains ought to desist when significant resistance is met. Furthermore, expected utility theory, as discussed

---

[129] Jones and Davis, in Berkowitz, ed., op. cit., p. 229.
[130] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., pp. 39-40. For a general discussion, see M. Brewster Smith, "Political Attitudes," in Knutson, ed., op. cit., p. 70.
[131] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

below, counsels that losing ventures ought to be scrapped regardless of the sunk costs that are involved.[132]

Predictive indeterminacy regarding the intentions of others when employing expected utility due to linear thinking.

This line of thinking is not necessarily wrong; a particular model of deterrence theory is largely predicated upon it.[133] The appetite is expected to grow with the eating and satiation may not take place unless the aggressive action is thwarted. But, as alluded to in a previous section, the assessment of the other here is largely dispositional and neglects the degree to which systemic dynamics are contributory. The spiral model of conflict incorporates situational dynamics and balances the benefits, costs, and risks of deterrence with those of conciliation in a particular instance. The motives and intentions of others are distinguished and at least considered. A state may fully intend its aggressive action, but it does so because it was compelled by the situation at hand. That is, the motive was fear for its safety even if its intention was aggressive.[134] In fact, if we can discern that

---

[132] William Samuelson and Richard Zeckhauser, "Status Quo Bias in Decision Making Sunk Costs," Journal of Risk and Uncertainty, vol. 1 (1988), pp. 7-59.

[133] According to Glaser, Jervis's deterrence model is a restrictive manifestation of deterrence theory in general. The deterrence model assumes that aggression by an otherwise secure state is the threat to be defended against. See Charles L. Glaser, "The Political Consequences of Military Strategy: Expanding and Refining the Spiral and Deterrence Models," World Politics, vol. 44, no. 4 (July 1992), p. 503, fn. 9.

[134] Glaser criticizes Jervis's characterizations of the spiral, and deterrence, models, respectively, for neglecting to distinguish between motives and intentions and claims to offer an improved theory. The criticism is not entirely apt as Jervis's earlier analysis of political acts to dispositions in a previous chapter is clearly predicated on the distinction between intentions and motives in order to determine how the perceiving state ought to treat the acting state. See

all like actors would take the same action in the same situation, it is difficult to impute malice on the part of the moving state.[135] As indicated above, an understanding of the security dilemma is relevant here although states tend to underestimate it, rather than overestimate it, with regard to others.[136] That is, they fail to see that the measures that they take to secure themselves just might threaten the security of others.

We learn little about the state's intentions when it acts in the expected manner even if the situation is not compelling.[137] While there are likely no a priori rules for conduct in international relations, one should not be surprised that great powers will vigorously defend their vital interests.[138] A policy may serve a number of distinctive values, any of which would be sufficient to justify the action. But when the policy is recognized by disinterested observers to serve a desired value, however they define it, the reason behind a state's action and its future intent with regard to others will be ambiguous from an informational standpoint.[139] For example, if a state claims a strategically important geographic choke-point, it gains a measure of security for itself against attack. But it should

---

Glaser, "The Political Consequences of Military Strategy," ibid., pp. 499-501; Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., Chapters Two and Three.

[135] Wolfers, Discord and Collaboration, op. cit., p. 13.

[136] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 21.

[137] Jones and Davis, in Berkowitz, ed., op. cit., pp. 229-30.

[138] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

[139] Jones and Davis, in Berkowitz, ed., op. cit., pp. 229-30.

also be obvious to others that such an advantage might be profitably used for aggression against others.

If the appetite does not necessarily grow with the eating, a state that achieves sufficient resources or values to increasingly provide for its own security may become more reasonable with others. Different returns to scale may be found as a state becomes increasingly able to provide for its security.[140] The Soviet doctrine of peaceful coexistence with the West under Krushchev came about as the Soviets claimed to achieve a substantial nuclear arsenal. In contrast, the communist Chinese contemporaneously argued that the Western nuclear threat was a paper tiger, a point taken largely because it lacked the means to defend itself without Soviet protection.[141] Furthermore, at some point that is hard to specify, the secure state may actually become more unreasonable and thus more aggressive because it is strong enough to bully others rather than to work with them in order to achieve mutual ends.[142] The peaceful end of the Cold War, in which the United States pocketed all of the gains with respect to the Soviet Union, may have led certain American decision-makers to believe that American military power could achieve almost any goal.[143] It certainly looks that way to much of the world regarding the decision of the former Bush Administration to

---

[140] Jervis, "Systems and Interaction Effects," in Snyder and Jervis, eds., op. cit., pp. 32-33.
[141] Dinerstein, "The Transformation of Alliance Systems," op. cit., p. 591.
[142] Jervis, "Systems and Interaction Effects," in Snyder and Jervis, eds., op. cit., pp. 32-33.
[143] Bacevich, American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

wage war in Iraq, although the subsequent difficulty of the task has led to sobering reassessments as to what military power can and cannot accomplish.

These dynamics can work in reverse. A state might deter another state believed to be secure and expect that continued deterrence will generate the same result only to find that it fails in the next instance. In fact, the latter may look for an opportunity to demonstrate that it will not tolerate a string of losses in succession.[144] To use Morgan's formulation, the success of immediate deterrence can prejudice general deterrence.[145] Redoubling one's effort may appear puzzling to observers since the failure to make a gain is generally not seen as a loss, but reputational costs may enter here.[146] Domestic audiences or allies might punish a state that appears unable to secure what it deems to be in its interest after a demand has been made. The fact of the demand puts the reputation at risk while the absence of a demand perhaps generates no such inference. But the situation is not so clear as non-linearity makes itself felt here. A state's electorate might punish a decision-maker in the next election were he to concede a small loss internationally, but rally to him were he to lose big after a

---

[144] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Lauren, ed., op. cit., p. 221; Jervis, "Political Decision Making: Recent Contributions," Political Psychology, vol. 2, no. 2 (Summer 1980), p. 93.
[145] Patrick Morgan, Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977); Jervis, "Rational Deterrence: Theory and Evidence," op. cit., pp. 198-99.
[146] Levy, "Quantitative Studies of Deterrence Success and Failure," in Paul C. Stern, Robert Axelrod, Robert Jervis, and Roy Radner, eds., Perspectives on Deterrence (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 126-27, fn. 27.

demand has been made.[147] Internationally, states can fear domino dynamics: the failure to prevail in one instance might lead allies to doubt the state's resolve to defend its other interests and consequently desert to the adversary. But here, other inferences are possible. The fact that a state quits a losing enterprise might encourage allies to place more stock in the rest of the state's defensive commitments.[148]

Determining dispositions from recent actions according to prospect theory. Much of the indeterminacy regarding the dynamics elaborated above result because an analysis of the actor's values and calculations must be made. This may be unavoidable when the situation is not so compelling. From a levels-of-analysis standpoint, behavior at both the domestic and individual decision-making levels, respectively, may be required rather than just relying on dynamics at the international level. Nevertheless, the indeterminacy also exists because of the manner in which an actor attempts to calculate another's intentions. Moreover, the method of calculation can be analyzed systemically. Expected utility theory sees the status quo as being arbitrary. Whether a state will take a conciliatory or conflictual approach toward others can turn on whether the action brings benefits in excess of costs with due considerations of the risks. One problem with expected utility comparison is that different actors may put different valuations on the same course of action in a particular

---

[147] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," Political Psychology, vol. 13, no. 2, Special Issue: Prospect Theory and Political Psychology (June 1992), p. 188.
[148] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," op. cit., p. 221.

instance. Another problem is that different risk profiles can generate different behavior even if agreement exists as to the value of the course of action. Thus, different values and different means-ends beliefs complicate the explanatory power and predictability of expected utility theory.[149]

In contrast to rational choice models, under prospect theory the carriers of value are gains and losses of wealth or assets, rather than overall positions of the latter. The typical S-shaped value function for prospect theory is defined for deviations from the reference point (usually the status quo) rather than on overall asset positions; is generally concave for gains and convex for losses; and is steeper for losses than for gains, experimentally derived as much as by a ratio of 2:1.[150] This means that the status quo anchors expectations and that states will take risky measures in order to maintain the status quo or to return themselves to the status quo after a loss. They will be reluctant to take risky measures to make similar gains. The latter dynamic is somewhat expected, but the former is quite surprising.[151] (Anecdotally, we feel less happy about fortuitously finding a twenty-dollar bill than we feel more pained upon finding that we lost twenty dollars that was formerly in our possession.) An actor's choice can be driven by how the issue is framed. In otherwise identical situations, an actor might take a

---

[149] Jervis, "Rational Deterrence: Theory and Evidence," op. cit., p. 186.
[150] Levy, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," in Barbara Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), p. 17.
[151] Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 41, no. 1 (March 1997), pp. 87-112.

risky action that is seen as averting a loss when the same actor will refrain from the same action if the issue is framed as one in which gains are possible.[152]

Three dynamics peculiar to prospect theory are important drivers of actor behavior. They are the endowment effect, the certainty principle, and the insurance premium/lottery ticket. The first two dynamics can work in conjunction; the third dynamic can work at cross-purposes to the first two.

States tend to endow their holdings with more value than a disinterested observer believes is appropriate.[153] This may be irrational, but it may also stabilize the situation when envy and covet are suppressed. Nevertheless, trades that a third party believes to be in the mutual interest of two parties might not be made when the latter two place an inordinately high value on what they

---

[152] Consider, for example, two alternative programs designed to combat an outbreak of disease in the U.S. in which 600 people are expected to die. In the survival frame, if Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved, while if Program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that 600 people will be saved, and a 2/3 probability that no people will be saved. Program A was chosen by 72 % of survey respondents (28% chose Program B). In the mortality frame, if Program C is adopted, 400 people will die, while if Program D is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that nobody will die, and a 2/3 probability that 600 people will die. Program C was chosen by 22% of survey respondents (78% chose Program D). As Tversky and Kahneman note, Programs A and C, and B and D, respectively, are identical, but the certain death of 400 people is less acceptable than a 2/3 chance that 600 people will die. Adopting a survival frame promotes risk averse behavior while adopting a mortality frame promotes risk seeking behavior. See, Tversky and Kahneman, "Rational choice and the framing of decisions," op. cit., pp. S258-60.

[153] Kahneman, Jack L. Knetsch, and Richard H. Thaler, "Experimental Tests of the Endowment Effect and the Coase Theorem," Journal of Political Economy, vol. 98, no. 6 (1990), pp. 1325-48; Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," op. cit., pp. 89-91.

individually possess.[154] Cognitive dissonance can also occur when states exaggerate the value of their possessions in order to justify the expenditures of effort being made to retain them in a contest with others.[155]

The certainty principle (or the non-linear response to probabilities) argues that actors will place an unusually high valuation on outcomes that have a probability of either 1 or 0. What is peculiar about this principle is that this preference is not sensitive to the value of the contemplated action.[156] For example, a certain outcome ought to provide great benefits, such as the disbanding of one's army because peace is certain. Moreover, people should pay more for actions that significantly reduce, but do not eliminate, a particular risk, but they do not do so because of an attachment to the certainty principle.[157]

In contrast, expected utility calculations tend to hedge, even if suboptimally, concerning the intentions of a potential adversary. This problem is evident due to the recent discovery in security studies of the existence of an

---

[154] Knetsch, "The endowment effect and evidence of nonreversible indifference curves," American Economic Review, vol. 79, no. 5 (December 1989), p. 1283; Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 201.
[155] Levy, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., p. 12.
[156] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," op. cit., pp. 263-91; Colin F. Camerer, "Individual Decision Making," in John H. Kagel and Alvin E. Roth, eds., The Handbook of Experimental Economics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 587-703; Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," op. cit., pp. 91-92; Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., pp. 201-202.
[157] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," op. cit., p. 265; G.A. Quattrone and Tversky, "Contrasting Rational and Psychological Analyses of Political Choice," American Political Science Review, vol. 82 (1988), p. 730.

adversary that is simultaneously aggressive and fearful. For example, the Soviets brutally suppressed independence movements in Eastern Europe. To those states the Soviets' actions were indeed aggressive, but to the Soviets the actions were necessary to prevent the crumbling of their protective cordon against feared NATO aggression.[158] An expected utility calculation will add together the various motivations of the Soviets with their associated probabilities. This linear combination of utilities and probabilities is not likely to produce high confidence in their intentions. Moreover, actions taken to prevent a fearful state from attacking can leave the state at a disadvantage if war breaks out because aggression is the primary motive.

Because of the certainty principle, prospect theory will not hedge, but will explicitly choose whether the Soviets are aggressive or whether they are insecure. Actions taken will either succeed very well because the correct risk has been defended against or they will fail spectacularly because the wrong risk has been addressed. One can only speculate as to the disastrous consequences had military airstrikes on Cuban positions taken place during the Cuban Missile Crisis, rather than assertive diplomacy in concert with the blockade by Kennedy towards Krushchev.

Under prospect theory, "choices involving gains are usually risk averse, and choices involving losses are often risk seeking except when the probability

---

[158] Betts, "Conventional Deterrence: Predictive Uncertainty and Policy Confidence," op. cit., pp. 174-75.

of winning or losing is small."[159] The value function combines with a probability-weighting function to produce the following dynamics: Indeterminacy of behavior occurs for extremely small probabilities (the possibility of rare catastrophes is either neglected or overweighted); small probabilities are overweighted while larger probabilities are underweighted; and extremely high probability events are treated as if they were certain.[160] Thus, the underweighting of probabilities serves to reinforce risk aversion for gain and risk acceptance for loss. But in the realm of small probabilities overweighting encourages risking acceptance for gain and risk aversion for loss. It is in this realm that both lottery tickets and insurance policies are attractive.[161] Thus, sure losses will be tolerated if they can be seen as a required payment for an activity, or the cost of doing business as in an insurance premium.[162] In certain situations, the sure insurance premium will be tolerated to hedge against the possibility of a rare but catastrophic loss. Such action is consistent with the certainty principle but inconsistent with the endowment effect. In other cases, the lottery ticket (or gamble) will tolerate taking risky behavior in order to avoid any loss at all. Such action violates the certainty principle, but is consistent with the endowment effect (that is, no loss).

---

[159] Tversky and Kahneman, "Rational choice and the framing of decisions," op. cit., p. S255.
[160] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," op. cit., pp. 280-84.
[161] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," op. cit., p. 286.
[162] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," op. cit., p. 281.

Prospect theory suffers from certain conceptual problems. The issue is rarely framed for the actors by a disinterested observer, but rather, the actors develop their own frames of reference.[163] Moreover, most international relations treatments of prospect theory derive attitudes toward risk solely on the basis of the value function and neglect the impact of the probability-weighting function which, as noted, can reverse dynamics such that risk seeking for gains (a lottery) and risk aversion for losses (an insurance premium) occurs.[164] This is problematic for the explanatory power of prospect theory because the weighting function is derived from experimental evidence[165] as if to explain findings which contravene the core thesis of the theory.[166] Moreover, as Kahneman and Tversky acknowledge, empirically, the purchase of insurance extends to the medium range of possibilities and small probabilities of disaster are sometimes entirely ignored.[167] Expected utility theory does little better on this score because either gambling for a gain or insuring against a loss can easily be explained but not

---

[163] For case studies see, Barbara Farnham, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis," McDermott, "Prospect Theory in International Relations: The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission," Audrey McInerney, "Prospect Theory and Soviet Policy Towards Syria, 1966-1967," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict, op. cit., pp. 41-118.
[164] Levy, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., p. 19.
[165] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," op. cit., pp. 282-83.
[166] The weighting function thus resembles an auxiliary theory. See, Imre Lakatos, "Falsification and the methodology of scientific research programs," in Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 175-76.
[167] Kahneman and Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," op. cit., p. 286.

within the same individual within the same theory.[168] Although not developed, Kahneman and Tversky later argue that "the framing of an action sometimes affects the actual experience of the outcome."[169] Farnham develops at length this proposition and also argues that the role of affect can be causal in both framing and frame changes as well. Thus the causality can be multidirectional.[170] This line of inquiry seems to be progressive for the research program in that it leads to the discovery of new facts in addition to explaining the anomalous findings.[171]

A simple application of the insurance premium/lottery ticket to international relations does not capture the complexities of deterrence unless modified. As a first cut, one can easily imagine the employment of the insurance premium in conservative fashion (thus making sure concessions) in order to hedge against the possibility of catastrophic loss. But successful deterrence can also require the use of the insurance premium in risky fashion (perhaps by raising the cost that an adversary will pay should it not desist in its provocation) in order to maintain the status quo. As noted above, in more extreme instances, a state might fight a war that it knows it will lose if such loss can stem further decline. But to call such actions employment of a lottery ticket is misleading

---

[168] Levy, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., p. 9, fn. 2.
[169] Tversky and Kahneman, "The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice," Science, vol. 211 (1981), p. 458.
[170] Farnham, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict, op. cit., pp. 60-61.
[171] Lakatos, "Falsification and the methodology of scientific research programs," in Lakatos and Musgrave, eds., Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge, op. cit., pp. 116-22, 132-38, 173-80.

because in both instances one is remaining risk acceptant for loss whereas use of the lottery ticket implies risk acceptance for gain. The concept of the lottery ticket retains its utility because states can be tempted either, to take long-shot chances in order to make gains, or to persist in losing ventures long after the strategic situation counsels cutting losses, respectively. However, it strains the imagination to believe that a state might use the lottery ticket in conservative fashion.

Finally, economists formally employ the preference reversal phenomenon when referring to lotteries.[172] Yet, psychologists and political scientists use the concept of preference reversal to refer to a broader category of framing effects.[173] For my purposes, one implication of Farnham's argument is that reframing an outcome as a loss rather than a gain (or vice versa) can cause decision-makers to reverse their order of preference among otherwise equivalent prospects.[174] Moreover, decisions regarding the attractiveness of insurance are quite sensitive

---

[172] Consider two gambles that are mathematically equivalent from an expected value standpoint: one that involves a high probability of winning a modest amount of money (P lottery) and the other that involves a low probability of winning a large amount of money ($ lottery). Most people prefer the P lottery but when asked to set a price at which they would be willing to sell their gamble, they put a higher reservation price on the $ gamble. Choices are apparently correlated with probabilities while prices are correlated with payoffs. See, Tversky and Richard H. Thaler, "Anomalies: Preference Reversals," Journal of Economic Perspectives, vol. 4, issue 2 (Spring, 1990), pp. 201-11; Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," op. cit., pp. 90-91, fn. 10.
[173] Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," op. cit., pp. 90-91, fn. 10.
[174] Farnham, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis: Insights from Prospect Theory," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict, op. cit., p. 61.

to relatively minor changes in the manner in which the problem is framed.[175] Thus, it is argued that, on balance, the noted conceptual problems associated with prospect theory do not disable it from generating stronger and more determinant explanations of actor behavior than expected utility theory. This is due to the role that affect appears to play both in the employment of the insurance premium/lottery ticket and in the framing and reframing of choices. Additionally, broadening the considerations under which the insurance premium will be used in conservative, and risky, fashion, respectively, can better capture the complexities of deterrence in international relations.

Both expected utility theory and prospect theory are purely intellectual constructs and therefore need to be leavened by the reality and experience that allows us to operate in the world. For our purposes here, in international relations, whether the insurance payment/lottery ticket in prospect theory will be used in a conservative or risky fashion is likely to turn on whether war is deemed to be inevitable or not.[176] This determination is not a deus ex machina, but the result of reality and experience made more difficult by concern with the magnitude of loss aversion. Thus, the following table characterizes the degree

---

[175] Slovic, B. Fischhoff, S. Lichtenstein, B. Corrigan, and B. Coombs, "Preference for Insuring Against Probable Small Losses: Insurance Implications," Journal of Risk and Insurance, vol. 44, no. 2 (1977), pp. 237-58.

[176] Betts, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Allison, Carnesale, and Nye, eds., op. cit., pp. 59-60; Jervis, "War and Misperception," op. cit., pp. 694-95. But even here, the situation is not so clear-cut as a state can manipulate risk short of war in order to profitably coerce its opponent. For analysis, see, Schelling, Arms and Influence, op. cit., Chapter 3.

and type of cooperation and conflict as a consequence of consistency mediated by loss aversion:

	Balance	Imbalance
Irrational consistency	**Perceptual syndrome** ·Deterrence ineffective ·Risky use of insurance premium up to transformation into a lottery ticket ·Insufficient affect Case: Pre-World War I	**Affective abandonment** ·Deterrence ineffective · Risky use of insurance premium up to transformation into a lottery ticket ·Obfuscating affect Cases: 1854 Crimean War, 1859 Austro-Italian War, 1863 2nd Polish Uprising, 1864 Danish War over Elbe Duchies, 1866 Austro-Prussian War, 1870 Franco-Prussian War
Rational consistency	**Intentional clarity** ·Deterrence effective ·Largely conservative use of insurance premium ·Stimulating affect Case: Cold War	**Widespread loss aversion** ·Deterrence effective ·Largely conservative use of insurance premium ·Discriminating affect Cases: 1821, 1826 Greek Revolts; 1830 Belgian Revolt; 1831, 1839 Turkish Revolts; 1848 Italian Revolt

Table 1: Prospective Balance: Consistency Based on Loss Aversion

Perceptual syndrome.

Referring to the upper left cell, when both the state and others are engaged in loss aversion because each believes that it is losing and mutually unaware of the others' actions, all sides may believe that others are merely trying to make gains at its expense and will desist when brought up short.[177] Even if all sides are aware that others are engaged in loss aversion and defending the status quo, they may have different interpretations of the status quo.[178] A state that loses territory by losing a war may not become reconciled to the loss even as the gaining state believes that a new status quo has been achieved that both sides will respect.[179] In lesser situations, a state may restrain its anxious ally and feel that it cannot continue to restrain it in the next instance because the aggrieved ally will doubt the fealty of the state in supporting its interests. This problem manifests itself in differing interpretations of the status quo because the restraining state will wrongly expect its adversary to take turns by conceding the next time if for no other reason than to allow the state to repair its relations with the ally that it restrained in the first instance. But the other side does not see it that way; it merely sees others as trying to make gains at its expense.

Irrespective of the sequence of concessions, the actions of another state that adversely impinge on our values and interests are likely to be

---

[177] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 192; Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," op. cit., p. 13.
[178] Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in Sears, Huddy, and Jervis, eds., op. cit., p. 271.
[179] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., pp. 199-200.

misinterpreted. Again, we return to the dynamic of affect. Does the action that another takes gratify or displease us? Streams of evidence that can be viewed as being ambiguous to a disinterested observer can be viewed as being functionally equivalent regarding the other's intentions when the action disadvantages the perceiving actor.[180] Identical factual information can cause us to interpret and value the actions of others quite differently depending on whether we are benefited or harmed by those actions. Creativity is accorded to others when their risky actions benefit us while recklessness is accorded to others when their risky actions harm us despite the fact that identical risks are taken by the two other actors.

While this double standard is an expression of Heider's general balance principle in which bad actions come from bad actors while good actions come from good actors,[181] it is nevertheless irrationally consistent. As noted earlier, cognition requires affect in order to stimulate it and to put into action its conclusions. The affective biases discussed in an earlier section anchor an endpoint along a continuum in which affect and cognition mutually interact. The reality principle, for example, allows us to see that an action by another that contravenes our interests nevertheless can serve a useful function for that actor. In this instance, we are not so bereft of reason as to allow irrational passions to cloud our understanding of the environment. Of course, we may be angry. But,

---

[180] Jones and Davis, in Berkowitz, ed., op. cit., p. 239.
[181] Fritz Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: Wiley, 1958); Jones and Davis, in Berkowitz, ed., op. cit., p. 239.

at a higher level of cognition, we understand both the anger and its source; however, this understanding comes from a reflection on our feelings and not from the feelings themselves.[182]

Affect stimulates the cognitive biases manifested by the individual decision-maker outlined previously and can be quite functional for purposive behavior when the shortcuts to thinking accurately reflect the reality that we are experiencing in the environment. Recall that these biases were the assimilation of new information to pre-existing images, the overestimation of complexity of our thought processes, the overconfidence in drawing inferences regarding the intentions of others, and perceptual satisficing. The degree (or intensity) of affect determines the degree to which these cognitive biases are positively associated with each other and the severity with which the biases affect a state's perceptions regarding the actions of others because of the reluctance to perceive trade-offs and consequently to make too many enemies.[183]

From the standpoint of the system, recall that balanced configurations result either when one issue is divisive or when all issues coalesce with each other such that states are divided into two opposing camps. As will be addressed later, a singular divisive issue that puts the system at risk tends to concentrate

---

[182] Robert B. Zajonc, "On the primacy of affect," American Psychologist, vol. 39 (1982), pp. 117-23; Steinbrunner, The Cybernetic Theory of Decision, op. cit., p. 110.

[183] The dynamic of affect logically, although non-linearly, links these distortions that, although reinforcing, were heretofore regarded as being ambiguously related. For discussion, see, Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., p. 18.

the mind and forces rational consistency on all of the major actors with a stake in maintaining the status quo. But the probability greater than chance that the scenario of multiple issue coalescence could spread system-wide only makes sense if shared cognitive biases are controlling. Remember that cognitive biases are prevalent and widespread whereas motivated biases tend to be specific to an individual actor and somewhat idiosyncratic. Moreover, recall that multiple sufficient causation occurs when a state adopts a favored policy that would be adopted for any single value or reason. Those who oppose the policy do so in an opposite but equally irrationally consistent manner. This can happen in a dyadic conflict, but for all of the major actors to be affected in this manner and to choose up sides seems quite implausible unless the same cognitive biases regarding the issues of importance contaminate their perspectives. The cognitive biases would be corrected were they pointed out by a disinterested observer. Unfortunately, when all of the major actors suffer from these biases there exists no credible disinterested actor. It strains credulity to believe that motivated biases could produce such a systemic result if for no other reason than that states with incommensurable values that cannot be sacrificed will find it hard to coordinate with each other on a plan of action. The result would be a Hobbesian 'war of all against all',[184] instead of two neatly divided and opposing camps. This is not to

[184] Although somewhat unclear on the subject, Heider considers three-way animosity to be an imbalanced situation (Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations, op. cit., pp. 202-03). More recently, Newcomb argues that the arrangement is nonbalanced or null (Theodore M. Newcomb, "Interpersonal Balance," in Robert P. Abelson, Elliot Aronson, William J.

argue that motivated biases cannot be present, just that they are not likely to be the root cause of conflict here.

When systems are tightly interconnected such that the actions of one actor affect the interests of others, those others are likely to implausibly infer that a singular action serves a number of different interests that contravene their own. If the world is not so neatly organized as to allow a decision-maker to rationally believe that a single policy can adequately serve a number of disparate values, why should others believe this to be the case? This is the mirror image of the actor's irrational belief that all good things go together; it is an equally irrational belief that the adversary is more centralized in its intentions than is actually the case.[185]

The result of this coalescence of values and attitudes, coupled with overconfidence in knowledge of the situation, is to generate a system-wide perceptual syndrome upon which state action is based. A useful dictionary definition of syndrome is "a group of signs and symptoms that collectively indicate or characterize a disease, psychological disorder, or other abnormal

---

McGuire, Newcomb, Milton J. Rosenberg, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, eds., Theories of Cognitive Consistency: A Sourcebook (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1968), p. 32). Three-way fights, although rare, are not unheard of in international relations. For examples, see Mohammed M. Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements and Political Violence in Algeria," Middle East Journal, vol. 54, no. 4 (Autumn, 2000), pp. 572-91; Raymond W. Copson, "Congo (formerly Zaire)," Congressional Research Service Issue Brief for Congress (2001).

[185] Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, op. cit., Chapter 8.

condition."[186] Alternatively, a syndrome is a collective mentality.[187] One reason why this syndrome is generated in international relations is that issues are perpetually left unresolved and allowed to pile up on each other. Subjective confusion as to who was responsible for such disorder prior to July 1914 is manifested in Kennedy's observation that "some Russians disliked the Anglo-Saxon powers more than they did Germany; some Austrians feared their German partner's ambitions almost as much as they did Russia's; some Britons feared Russia more than they did Germany; some Germans Britain more than Russia."[188] The fly in the ointment occurs when a reckless state is repeatedly rebuffed, but comes to believe that it has restrained itself too often and comes to see its risk-taking probes as a legitimate aspect of statecraft.[189] The disintegration of a major actor can promote such probes; even status quo states believe that they can improve their positions at little cost by actions that chip away at the security

---

[186] The American Heritage Dictionary, 2nd ed., (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1985).

[187] Kennedy refers to the common belief that the offensive could produce quick victories against massive, heavily-equipped, European armies a strategical error or mentalitié (Kennedy, "The First World War and the International Power System," op. cit., p. 10). This mentalitié is well captured in Jack L. Snyder, The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

[188] Kennedy, "The First World War and the International Power System," op. cit., p. 29.

[189] This is Schroeder's point regarding the foreign policy of Russia in the years prior to the outbreak of World War I. See, Schroeder, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Jervis, Wetzel, and Levy, eds., Systems, Stability, and Statecraft, op. cit., pp. 186-87.

of a failing state.[190] The repetition of issues raised and half resolutions to them seduce states into believing that the actions taken in the past will work in future confrontations without realizing that not all states have a common understanding of the status quo because the status quo has been shifting. Joll's fin-de-siècle characterization of European thinking as being permeated with foreboding on the one hand, and wishful hoping based on Social Darwinist principles of social purification on the other hand,[191] captures the Janus-faced notion of a syndrome in which all actors are irrationally certain of what needs to be done in order to survive.

In asking whether the First World War was unavoidable, an analogy nicely captures this notion of a system-wide syndrome that imperfectly facilitated cooperation in spite of itself in the past but resulted in catastrophe when the various actors decided not to play by the rules. According to Schroeder,

> "compare World War I to a train collision involving five trains, all in a race to reach the station first or at least to avoid coming in last. The strict determinist view…holds that they collided because all five were on intersecting tracks, the only way to avoid an accident was for at least one or two of them to give way to the others, thereby losing the race, and none considered this outcome acceptable. An indeterminist view would hold that the trains, though they were running on unsafe tracks at dangerously high speeds with obsolete equipment operated in certain instances by reckless engineers, were not running on intersecting tracks but parallel ones set dangerously close together. Hence a collision was not inevitable

---

[190] Thomas J. Christensen, "Conclusion: System Stability and the Security of the Most Vulnerable Significant Actor," in Snyder and Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System, op. cit., pp. 329-56.
[191] James Joll and Gordon Martel, The Origins of the First World War, 3rd ed. (New York: Peason Longman, 2007).

> but could only arise by accident (say, if one of the trains left the tracks or swayed into another one) or by deliberate recklessness. The latter caused the actual collision. My version holds that while all five trains were involved in the race and running together closely enough that all would be involved in any accident, only three of the five were on a collision course. These three, however, had been in similar races over this same terrain a number of times before, and knew how an accident could be avoided—when to slow down, what signals to give, what switches or side-tracks to take, etc.—actions that involved some active coordination between themselves and at least passive cooperation by the other two trains in the race. What caused the collision in this instance was a refusal by the engineers on all five trains at critical moments to take the steps known from experience to be needed to avoid an accident. This failure to act derived from a shared conviction that such actions were no longer part of the game, had become futile and counterproductive, would cause them to lose the race, and were in any case not their particular responsibility. This collective mentality and fixed attitude made the collision unavoidable."[192]

Of particular interest here is the characterization more of tragedy than of willful malice despite the recklessness exhibited by the major actors. This syndrome-like quality to the actors' calculations is manifested in a collective underestimation, rather than overestimation, of deterrent threats discussed previously. Again, underestimation occurs when a state takes actions that prejudice the interests of others that are most certain to be defended. Thus, framing of the situation is not likely to be one in which measures are taken to increase the probability that war can be avoided rather than on reducing casualties if war breaks out. Decision-makers will focus on measures that will certainly save some lives even though lives will certainly be lost as a response to

---

[192] Schroeder, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Jervis, Wetzel, and Levy, eds., Systems, Stability, and Statecraft, op. cit., p. 182.

their aggression. In contrast, a standard expected utility calculation would counsel restraint in order to increase the probability that the peace can be maintained and that no lives will be lost.[193]

Thus, states will retain their attachment to endowments and cooperative schemes that do not promise to reduce the chance of war with near certainty will be dismissed out of hand. The insurance premium is likely to be employed in a risky fashion, implausibly so as to inoculate oneself against any loss. Extreme instances can lead states to transform the insurance premium into a lottery ticket. Deterrence will likely provoke, rather than stem, conflict. When all states operate in this manner, systemic conflict becomes likely. Again, with regard to the First World War, Schroeder argues that,

> "anyone who tried to suspend the rules of power politics, of 'every man and every alliance for himself, and the devil take the hindmost,' was a fool and would earn the fool's reward. Hence, to ask any British, French, Russian, Italian, or even German leader to sacrifice or subordinate particular interests and opportunities of theirs for the sake of some sort of collective action to stabilize the international position of Austria-Hungary so as to lessen the chances of a general war was to ask the impossible and absurd to ask them to commit political suicide at home and to be laughed at and swindled abroad."[194]

On the one hand, we can see from this analysis that the degree of affect is sufficient to activate the cognitive biases which result in a failure to make value tradeoffs because a state believes that a failure to defend its interests will result

---

[193] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 198.
[194] Schroeder, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Jervis, Wetzel, and Levy, eds., Systems, Stability, and Statecraft, op. cit., pp. 190-91.

in individual loss. On the other hand, the degree of affect afflicting the major actors is insufficient to stimulate hard thinking into how one's actions are detrimental to the interests of others and how they might react. Too many enemies are made because no values or interests are sacrificed. The cognitive biases conspire to ensure that none are likely to give significant thought to how a credible commitment that it will respect the interests of others might be constructed and how to convey that it believes that others, in turn, will respect its interests through reciprocated commitments.

Superficially, this deficient result seems analogous to Boulding's distinction between illusory incompatibility and real incompatibility among states. Nevertheless, there are differences and the problems associated with loss aversion are more intractable. Illusory incompatibility exists when the images that states hold of one another generate conflict out of proportion to the objective situation because of situational dynamics.[195] Actor illusions, combined with the dynamics of the situation, reminiscent of 'Richardson processes,' create perverse dynamics when both sides merely react to each other's actions without thinking.[196] Real incompatibility exists when the realization of an actor's interests result in direct losses for others. But loss aversion that is not mutually understood can result in states overestimating the hostility of the other without realizing how their actions harm the interests of others. A better understanding

---

[195] Kenneth Boulding, "National Images and International Systems," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 3, no. 2 (1959), p. 130.
[196] Lewis Richardson, Statistics of Deadly Quarrels (Pittsburgh: Boxwood Press, Chicago: Quadrangle, 1960), p. xxi.

of the situation can mitigate illusory incompatibility but it can't mitigate the felt need to avoid losses. The remedy to real incompatibility is straight-forward: deter the aggressor through denial or punishment. But when all states are in the domain of losses, not only do concessions need to be made (hence, conceding sure losses), but all have to sacrifice, know that others have sacrificed, and know that others know that others have sacrificed.

The dynamic of loss aversion that is not widely understood is a driver that reinforces the conflictual aspects of balance and irrational consistency, which, in turn, reinforce each other. More systemic conflict should result than would be the case were actors to base their conduct on expected utility calculations. When states believe that they can avoid making value tradeoffs by aligning with like-minded others, they fail to realize that others will align with one another to thwart the original states' efforts because similar calculations are being made. Alignments will tighten as the hostility of others is overestimated. The degree of affect increases, thus increasing the severity of the positively associated cognitive biases that promote confidence that the state can prevail without realizing that adversaries believe that they are gaining similar confidence.

Affective abandonment.

Referring to the upper right cell, affective abandonment is shorthand for mutually affective abandonment of rational consistency. Realism argues that states tend, or ought to tend, to their interests as they are affected by other states. But the intersection of irrational consistency and structural imbalance offers the

opportunity for mutual reinforcement of both dynamics, and thus the debilitation of realism's rationally consistent dictum here. It has been shown that affect is necessary to cognition (and vice versa), can promote efficient decision-making, but also can debilitate it either through insufficiency or surplus. Affect during decision-making can parallel and thus reinforce the prospect theory tendency to respond more to changes in values than to changes in absolute values when assessing the consequences of decisions.[197] Moreover, affect is a contributing cause of perception of risk.[198] Thus, a decision-maker's estimate of the risk of an action can also be a function of her estimate of its possible benefit.[199] Risk assessment is also a function of how a decision-maker feels about a particular target of contemplated action.[200] Strong domestic or physiological needs[201] can lead a decision-maker to underestimate the risks of a contemplated political action at the same time that she overestimates its potential benefit.[202]

---

[197] Lowenstein and Jennifer Lerner, "The role of affect in decision-making," in Richard J. Davidson, Klaus R. Scherer, and H. Hill Goldsmith, eds., The handbook of affective science (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 619-42.
[198] Slovic, Melissa L. Finucane, Ellen Peters, and Donald G. MacGregor, "Risk as Analysis and Risk as Feelings: Some Thoughts about Affect, Reason, Risk, and Rationality," Risk Analysis, vol. 24, no. 2 (2004), p. 315.
[199] Ali Alhakami and Slovic, "A psychological study of the inverse relationship between perceived risk and perceived benefit," Risk Analysis, vol. 14, no. 6 (1994), pp. 1085-96. Cited in McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., p. 697.
[200] Slovic, "Trust, emotion, sex, politics, and science," op. cit., pp. 689-701.
[201] A recent archetypical example is the suggestion from commentators that George W. Bush's motivation for war against Iraq stemmed from a desire to revenge Saddam Hussein's attempt to assassinate the elder Bush a decade earlier. See, McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., p. 691.
[202] McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., p. 697.

Consequently, motivated biases can result in states leaving the international stage and turning inward when retrenching seems attractive as a short-term solution to problems that are largely domestic in nature. As analyzed above, perceptual syndromes result in states overattending to the interests of others, whereas mutual affective abandonment results in states underattending to others' interests. The consequence of the latter is to leave the field relatively open for states to make easy gains through aggression. Prospect theory does not argue that states will never be opportunistic for gain, only that aggression is more likely to be the result of loss aversion than of the quest to add to one's portfolio of values and interests. The isolationist states, in turn, look to stanch losses by turning inward, thus abdicating their interest (dare I say responsibility?) in ensuring that unprovoked aggression be punished.

Lebow's analysis of crises that were the result of defensive avoidance indicate that the states that suffered from such bias either were aware or should have been aware that their adversaries would oppose and defeat their efforts.[203] Debilitating affect precludes an understanding of the situation. This is an important finding, but his analysis may suffer from a representative bias; the cases in which defensive avoidance occur have significant implications for

[203] Lebow, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: Reading the Lessons Correctly," Political Science Quarterly, vol. 98, no. 3 (Autumn, 1983), pp. 431-58; Lebow, Between Peace and War, op. cit.

international conflict, but they seem to be somewhat rare.[204] Perhaps more consequential for long-run geopolitical trends because they are more frequent are cases in which states differentially engage themselves in domestic and international affairs and the implications that this has for opportunism on the part of others. The degree of affect experienced by both sides will tend to obfuscate, rather than clarify, the situation. Instability can result as clear commitments to defend the status quo will not have been made. For example, the splendid isolation practiced by Britain in the 1850s occurred because new social welfare demands precluded both defending the Empire as well as the balance of power on the Continent. Britain was caught in a Catch-22; its prosperity at home depended on benefits derived from the Empire, but the latter was increasingly difficult to defend against the encroachments of others. Cutting costs by failing to engage in active diplomacy on the Continent allowed Germany a free hand to unify, thus making it more aggressive in the imperial sphere and putting greater pressure on Britain. Although there were dissenters, British decision-makers were slow to acknowledge the magnitude of the threat because Prusso-British dynastic ties repeatedly tamped down its estimation.

States may be desperate to stem losses and they may take shortcuts to regain their positions that mutually surprise others. The concept of renormalization of the status quo is relevant here. States that lose values or

[204] As noted earlier, the outbreak of the First World War is a contestable case regarding purely motivated biases. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor is not a pure case of defensive avoidance.

resources may not reconcile themselves to such loss and may take risky actions in order to regain those values. In contrast, states that make gains renormalize much faster and defend those gains as the newfound status quo reference. This is because they appear to achieve an "instant endowment effect."[205] Both sides will surprise each other as they ultimately defend what they rightfully believe to be theirs.

How is the renormalization of the status quo dynamic different from that analyzed in the previous section regarding misinterpretations of the status quo and why is the spread between the perceived and actual status quo wider than it would be in the earlier case? In the first instance, a state that loses territory or resources in a war to another state may not be reconciled to that loss, but the gaining state should not be surprised that the other harbors irredentist claims. In the present circumstance under discussion, the gains are made because one side has essentially left the field of play in order to retrench and then unexpectedly reappears to reclaim any losses made internationally during its absence. Moreover, the gains may be made at the expense of third parties so it is not obvious that the retrenching state has concretely lost anything of value. But the retrenching state may be tempted to take shortcuts in order to regain what it believes to be the status quo by aligning with other aggrieved states. They essentially 'hold the ring' for the other by promising to support its claims with the proviso that their claims are not interfered with. The retrenching state will

---

[205] Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler, "Experimental Tests of the Endowment Effect and the Coase Theorem," op. cit., p. 1342.

have motivated biases to overestimate the others' deterrent postures and concede bargaining advantages because it wishes to concentrate on internal affairs. To the state that has made easy gains because of little interference, motivated biases will lead it to underestimate the retrenching state's deterrent posture. These dynamics will reinforce each other, thus leading to the belief that compatibility exists regarding the intentions of both sides. But each side will surprise the other when it eventually takes actions to defend what it perceives to be the status quo that are riskier than those recommended by a simple misinterpretation of the status quo and certainly riskier than those recommended by expected utility calculations. For an example of the shortcut, after its humiliation at the conclusion of the Crimean War, Russia turned inward in order to develop its economy and military. But it also aligned with revisionist France under Napoleon III to support its Black Sea claims in return for supporting French claims in Egypt.

Because the spread in perceptions of the status quo is so wide, the insurance premium can be used in an extremely risky fashion by both sides in order to regain losses or to avoid losses. In extreme cases, particularly when defensive avoidance is evident, the insurance premium can be transformed into a risky long-shot lottery ticket. Motivated biases that are the result of domestic politics can lead states to take non-obvious measures to regain their influence. But in so doing, they create temporary imbalance throughout the system, imbalance due to apparent inattention on the part of retrenching states that allow

others to engage in fait accomplis that may or may not be immediately contested.[206] For instance, Germany's wars of unification with Austria in 1866, and France in 1870, respectively, were neither contested nor officially recognized by others, thus, giving subsequent German leaders the mistaken belief that future aggression would continue to go uncontested.[207]

The foregoing discussion suggests three systemic possibilities that are exhaustive regarding affective abandonment. Mutual conciliatory affective abandonment occurs when states are overly solicitous of the other's interests and thus fail to make clear in timely fashion to each other their determination to protect their respective interests from encroachment. Mutual deterrence, which should be effective in delineating the limits to which states will go to accommodate the other, then becomes counterproductive. This is because, without timely resistance, statesmen will then overestimate their room for maneuver and then infuse their actions with affect (notably amour-propre) when others finally put up resistance. The attachment to the endowments will not be adequately advertised to the other. Relaxation of the certainty principle will merely serve to confuse. The insurance premium will appear to be used in conservative fashion, but then can be employed in risky fashion due to the renormalization problem.

---

[206] For inferences that aggressors and third parties draw regarding the timing of responses to fait accomplis, see Levy, "Prospect Theory and International Relations: Theoretical Applications and Analytical Problems," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., pp. 121-25.

[207] Schroeder, "The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure," World Politics, vol. 39, no. 1 (October 1986), p. 9.

Because prospect theory does not disallow the possibility of opportunistic gain, mutual aggressive affective abandonment occurs when states exploit imbalance within the system to collude with one another to commit aggression against third parties for perceived easy gain. Because noninvolved states tend to be risk acceptant for loss, they will largely be indifferent to unprovoked aggression as long as it does not obviously affect their own portfolio of interests. Thus, the attachment to endowments will seemingly be irrelevant to them even as it operates strongly in states that fear losses. Aggressive states will mistake easy gains to be made and thus the belief that the certainty principle operates to their advantage. But due to unexpected resistance, noninvolved states will have to be recompensed handsomely in order to break stalemates. Unprovoked aggression will thus resemble the risky use of the insurance premium that easily can transform itself into a long-shot play of a lottery ticket.

Asymmetric affective abandonment occurs when states are overdeterred while an expansive state is simultaneously underdeterred and thus makes piecemeal gains through unprovoked aggression. Timely deterrent threats will not have been made. Decision-makers may engage in preference reversals and make common cause with the aggressor by offering to 'hold the ring' in order to make gains themselves while other major powers turn isolationist. Both abetting and isolationist decision-makers will engage in irrational consistency to rationalize actions that derive from motivated bias. Attachment to endowments will be confused. The certainty principle will either reward aggressors because of

untimely or non-existent resistance or it will punish aggressors as states that fail to renormalize contest the losses that they have sustained.

Widespread Loss Aversion.

Referring to the lower right cell, when loss aversion is both widespread and widely understood, states should be rationally consistent when analyzing their environments. Reality and experience should lead to a generally correct understanding of the motives and intentions of others. Cross-cutting issues among states and the non-obvious axes of threat induce a measure of caution, but this caution must both be validated and rewarded. The hard edges associated with different values adduced regarding extant issues should be softened when adopting moderate solutions acceptable to all. Additionally, mutual cooperation can reduce the backlog of important issues that can pile up, fester, and join in unpredictable ways to produce conflict all out of proportion to reality. The international system should be relatively peaceful. Because deterrence is easier than compellence, states will take strong actions to protect the status quo. Thus, deterrence, which only requires that the targeted state refrain from proscribed behavior, should prevail. In contrast, compellence requires that a targeted actor take demonstrable action, for instance ceding a piece of territory to the demanding state.[208] Because states are risk averse for gain under prospect theory, not only will there be a lower likelihood of states engaged in compellence, but such states will not likely prevail when they make such demands.

---

[208] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 192; Schelling, Arms and Influence, op. cit., pp. 69-91.

As noted previously, a state that takes an action generally expected by others that also potentially serves a number of disparate values provides only trivially ambiguous information of intentionality. But, widespread loss aversion and an understanding that this is taking place should provide better information about the state's intentions. The moderate degree of stress induced by uncertainty produces a more discriminating level of affect, thus motivating states to engage in reality-testing.[209] Because the system is not static, states will engage in sustained interaction with each other to determine whether the images that they have of the other's deterrent profile are correspondent or not. By probing their environments, states could attempt to determine whether the signals that they send to each other are too subtle to yield accurate information and thus adjust accordingly.[210] Instead of presuming that the other rejected the state's signals (which occurs when cognitive biases predominate) rather than that it did not receive them,[211] the state could redouble its efforts to ensure that the other state understands its intentions to defend its interests and that the other state's interests will be respected in turn. Complex bargaining strategies can be developed that should provide mutual benefits.[212]

---

[209] Boulding, "The Learning and Reality-Testing Process in the International System," in Farrell and Smith, eds., op. cit., pp. 1-15.
[210] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., op. cit., p. 30.
[211] Jervis, "War and Misperception," op. cit., p. 692.
[212] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., op. cit., p. 30.

As states take account of the interests of others, they will relax their attachment to endowments, accept cooperative measures that promote peace but without certainty, and use the insurance premium in conservative fashion by tolerating small but sure losses so as to hedge against the possibility of mutual ruin. Threats to revert to more risk acceptant actions will only be taken to bring recalcitrant states back into the cooperative fold. Thus when loss aversion is widespread and widely understood, deterrence should be effective in stemming conflict. Such actions promote imbalance within the system that helps to reinforce the rational consistency that makes widespread loss aversion possible.

To a point that is hard to specify, widespread loss aversion can sustain itself when the systemic dynamics are driven even harder. Even when states believe that they have sustained significant losses, they will nevertheless understand that others have lost significantly as well. The temptation to recover losses by engaging in high risk policies at the expense of others is muted by the understanding that others will react with high risk policies of their own, thus, bringing mutual ruin for all. Multidirectional causality should reinforce both the dynamics of imbalance and rational consistency. A rationally consistent understanding of the situation will have the effect of narrowing, rather than spreading, values deemed by states to be important. This supports mutual agreement and thus reinforces the diffusion of security threats that are simultaneously seen as being manageable. This new, improved, reality of the

environment in the form of greater imbalance, in turn, reinforces the rational consistency that makes a proper understanding of the environment possible.

By mimicking essentially cooperative overtures, in which tit-for-tat responses to cooperation and defection occur, states can ameliorate the Prisoner's Dilemma that states are confronted with.[213] As more states buy into cooperation they will surprise themselves because their insurance premiums will be less than expected.[214] This dynamic should somewhat mitigate the problems that states have in bargaining over the division of losses.[215] The result is a somewhat benign self-fulfilling prophecy of cooperation that can sustain itself.

We can expand Boulding's distinction between illusory and real incompatibility, respectively, to argue that the interests of states operating under widespread loss aversion reflect real compatibility. A clearer understanding of the situation due to sustained interaction here can reveal the real compatibility that exists.

---

[213] Robert Axelrod, The evolution of cooperation (New York: Basic Books, 1984); McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., p. 696.
[214] Mellers, Schwartz, Ho, and Ritov, "Decision affect theory: Emotional reactions to the outcomes of risky options," op. cit., pp. 423-29; McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality," op. cit., p. 699.
[215] It is easier to bargain over the division of gains rather than the division of losses. For theoretical treatments, see, Max H. Bazerman, "Negotiator judgment," American Behavioral Scientist, vol. 27, no. 2 (1983), pp. 211-28; Janice Gross Stein, "International cooperation and loss avoidance: framing the problem," in Stein and L. Pauly, eds., Choosing to cooperate: How states avoid loss (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

Intentional clarity.

Finally, referring to the lower left cell, intentional clarity need not lead to an extreme evaluation of the other in the absence of debilitating affect. Again, reality and experience should lead to an understanding of when balanced configurations have a real referent. Betts usefully distinguishes between situations in which ideology and power generate adversarial relations, on the one hand, and situations in which visceral hatred is the basis for the relationship, on the other hand.[216] Only in cases in which visceral hatred is controlling will intentional clarity lead to an extremely negative evaluation of the other. Such situations exist when the intentions of a state indicate that it is irremediably aggressive. States with hegemonic designs in violently overturning the world order and supplanting it with one of their own making fit this category. Real incompatibility exists in the sense that the success of the aggressive hegemonic aspirant would doom the independence and perhaps the existence of the other states. The system is likely to be balanced in this situation because of rational consistency. Reality and experience will point towards the wisdom of opposing this state.[217] This is because, sating the aggressor's appetite in the short term,

---

[216] Betts, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Allison, Carnesale, and Nye, eds., op. cit., p. 60; Slovic, "Trust, emotion, sex, politics, and science," op. cit., pp. 689-701.

[217] This is not to argue that opposing the aggressive state will be easy. Collective action problems are difficult enough but can be exacerbated when the aggressive state differentially treats its potential victims, thus attempting to buy them off. On this point, see Rosecrance and Lo, "Balancing, Stability, and War," op. cit., pp. 479-500. For an argument as to when the cross-over point from free-riding on opposing an aggressive state with hegemonic designs to balancing against it

merely whets the aggressor's long term ambitions. Thus, an evaluation of the need to stand firm, on the one hand, and an evaluation of the costs of not doing so, on the other hand, which can be mutually exclusive, are related because the analysis is produced by a coherent image of the adversary.[218] Still, situations in which states attempt to destroy each other due to visceral hatred ought to be rare because "the moderate probability of territorial loss is a more potent disincentive than the higher probability of failure to gain territory, if there is no countervailing probability of loss from failure to attack."[219]

The implications for conflict predicated on ideology and power relations are not so clear-cut. It is in the nature of ideology to miscalculate the strategic implications of a situation in which a state believes that it is losing.[220] The problem is compounded when adversaries mutually believe that they are losing. But, when loss aversion is not occurring even as both sides vigorously defend their interests, adversaries can take the ideological posturing of the other for what it is: a low cost means of solidifying cohesion within each camp. Reflecting on the biases discussed, there is a difference between the degree of affect stimulating motivation to draw inferences regarding actions that serve useful

---

occurs, see, Glenn H. Snyder, Alliance Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 50-52.

[218] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," op. cit., p. 23, fn. 31; Also, see, Jack Snyder, "Rationality at the Brink: The Role of Cognitive Processes in Failures of Deterrence," World Politics, vol. 30, no. 3 (April 1978), pp. 345-65.

[219] Betts, "Conventional Deterrence," op. cit., p. 176.

[220] Betts, "Conventional Deterrence," op. cit., p. 175. Also, see Kyung-Won Kim, Revolution and the International System (New York: New York University Press, 1970), pp. 30-36 et passim.

purposes for others, on the one hand, and the degree of affect that circumvents the inference process, on the other hand. The difference between these two instances turns on whether or not debilitating affect is at play, which, in turn, is a function of whether the perceiving state believes that it is losing, regardless of whether the other state is responsible for the perception of loss or whether the perceiving state is objectively losing at all. In the more extreme case, the losing state deems the outbreak of war to be inevitable.

For example, although it waxed and waned, the ideological rhetoric between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, although hostile in content, reflects a case in which distinctive values or interests being served were assimilated to a presumed common value. As a consequence, Soviet rhetoric regarding capitalism, although deeply offensive to the American way of life, could be taken with a grain of salt. Claims of Yankee imperialism, dollar diplomacy, and exploitation of the worker can be seen as assimilating non-common values served into a coherent hostile image of American capitalism. But this is to be expected from those who hold an antithetical ideology.[221] Similarly, China today is variously accused of (ironically) dollar diplomacy, imperialism in Africa regarding the drive to secure access to needed natural resources, failure to help in censuring such resource-rich states that engage in human rights abuses against their people, and cornering the market for such resources, specifically to

[221] Jones and Davis, in Berkowitz, ed., op. cit., p. 240.

the exclusion of Taiwan.[222] It is difficult to know whether such actions demonstrate intentional clarity of hostile intentions on the part of the Chinese or whether they are merely part and parcel of great power relations, that is, "finding ways to preserve or gain an advantageous position in the correlation of forces—without provoking a dangerous response."[223]

In the more extreme variation, German suspicion and fear regarding encirclement by members of the Triple Entente prior to the outbreak of the First World War is a good example of cognitive bias in which different values served by the actions of other states were viewed as comprising a coordinated effort to ruin Germany. The antidote was predominance on the Continent because it was feared that the failure to achieve such status would doom Germany to a subservient status in which it would increasingly be less able to defend its rightful interests as a great power. There was likely no design to encircle Germany, but German bellicosity increasingly provoked other states to take actions both individually and in concert that had the effect of fueling German suspicions.[224] Security interests by definition are incompatible when a state

---

[222] Michael E. O'Hanlon and Richard C. Bush, III, "China's Rise and the Taiwan Challenge," brookings.edu/opinions, (May 3, 2007); Harry G. Broadman, "China and India Go to Africa: New Deals in the Developing World," Foreign Affairs, (March/April 2008); Lydia Polgreen and Howard W. French, "China's Trade in Africa Carries a Price Tag," New York Times, World Section: Africa (August 21, 2007).

[223] Betts, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Allison, Carnesale, and Nye, op. cit., p. 68.

[224] Paul W. Schroeder, "World War I as Galloping Gertie: A Reply to Joachim Remak," Journal of Modern History, vol. 44, no. 3 (September 1972), pp. 326-29.

comes to believe that its own security requires the insecurity of others.[225] When such a situation occurs, affect works in conjunction with intentional clarity to produce an extremely negative evaluation of others that may not be objectively true when relations deteriorate but will become objectively true as attitudes harden.

When intentional clarity without extreme negative affect is the case, prospect theory argues that a state should be reluctant to take risks that would bring significant gains if it is also possible that those same risks might lose the state what it values. Satisfaction with the status quo may not be high, but the status quo will not be risked unless it cannot be maintained.[226] The attachment to endowments will be well advertised while the certainty principle will be relaxed. In such a situation, détente can prevail between adversaries even if an entente cannot form through a reversal of alliances. Mutually refraining from actions that might precipitate a collapse of the status quo is not the same as coordinated actions either to ward off a common threat from another state or to make gains at the expense of that other state.[227] This argument parallels the prospect theory hypothesis that states are more likely to avoid taking from the commons (thus, failing to secure a gain) than they are to provide for a collective good (thus, ensuring an immediate loss)[228] if it can be argued that the United States and the

---

[225] Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," op. cit., pp. 185-86.
[226] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 194.
[227] Dinerstein, "The Transformation of Alliance Systems," op. cit., p. 596.
[228] Marilynn B. Brewer and Roderick M. Kramer, "Choice Behavior in Social Dilemmas: Effects of Social Identity, Group Size, and Decision Framing," Journal

Soviet Union, by virtue of their preponderant positions, had common concerns and interests that were not necessarily shared by their respective allies.[229]

To exemplify, Gaddis argues that the Cold War was prolonged, in part, because of the disposition of Germany.[230] The Soviets offered reunification to Chancellor Adenauer, but only if Germany adopted neutrality. The prospect that West Germany might reconstitute its army within NATO or a proposed European Defense Community forced Stalin's hand.[231] From Adenauer's perspective, reunification had great emotional and symbolic appeal, but the cost was to cede a significant economic and political lifeline to the West in exchange for obtaining a politically corrupt East Germany. Adenauer rightly saw that a prosperous West Germany tied to the West would eventually attract its eastern brethren with no loss of present benefits.[232] To the Americans, Adenauer was more pro-Western than the West had any right to expect[233] and they might have allowed a reunified Germany, but not if it adopted neutrality. The Americans remembered too well the history of both the Rapallo agreement of 1922 and the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 in which Germany and the Soviet Union

---

of Personality and Social Psychology, vol. 50, no. 3 (1986), pp. 543-49; Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," op. cit., pp. 93-94.

[229] Dinerstein, "The Transformation of Alliance Systems," op. cit., p. 594.

[230] Gaddis, We Now Know, op. cit., pp. 114, 132.

[231] Gaddis, We Now Know, op. cit., p. 126.

[232] Gaddis, We Now Know, op. cit., pp. 120, 123.

[233] Marc Trachtenberg, History and Strategy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 177-78.

colluded with each other to disastrous results. [234] A reunified, independent, Germany was seen by the United States and the Soviet Union as a loss even if both sides might have mutually benefited from ceasing to have to provide for its security and well-being. This was certainly the case regarding East Germany, which was an economic deadweight on the resources of the Soviet Union.[235]

In contrast, risky actions will be taken to shore up an ally that is losing, but such actions will not be taken to achieve a similar gain for that ally.[236] Again, because deterrence is easier than compellence, the defending side should have a bargaining advantage.[237] Were domino dynamics to predominate, success for one camp would spell the demise of the other. In this sense, real incompatibility exists between the adversaries, but the insurance premium will only be used by the state to retain or to regain the perceived status quo, not to vanquish the other state by depriving it of its allies. Quite a different inference process occurs under expected utility theory. Deutsch and Kaplan argue that a state might actually gain an advantage by relinquishing claims on a disputed territory if its adversary becomes bogged down in an area that is neither governable nor economically

---

[234] Gaddis, We Now Know, op. cit., p. 126.
[235] Dinerstein, "The Transformation of Alliance Systems," op. cit., p. 595; Gaddis, We Now Know, op. cit., pp. 120, 127.
[236] Dennis Ross, "Risk aversion in Soviet decision-making," in J. Valenta and W. Potter, eds., Soviet decisionmaking for national security (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984), pp. 237-51; McInerney, "Prospect Theory and Soviet Policy Towards Syria, 1966-1967," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., pp. 101-18.
[237] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 193.

viable,[238] but this viewpoint is unlikely to gain much currency when states are risk acceptant for loss.

Testing hypotheses and case study selection.

The interactionist theory constructed above synthesizes situational and dispositional dynamics with a consideration as to whether war is deemed to be inevitable or not in order to better explain the incidence of cooperation and conflict between states. The hypothetico-deductive approach, in which the independent variables of balance and attitudinal consistency are mediated by risk aversion, generates distinctive patterns of actor behavior. This interactionist approach provides better explanatory power than does the neorealist approach, which relies on an analysis of the distribution of capabilities in order to determine actor intentionality. The Waltzian notion that wars occur because there is nothing to stop them[239] must be qualified. The interactionist approach presented here argues that wars will more likely spring from fear than from aggression whereas the neorealist view is agnostic on this point. The hypotheses developed above are sufficiently specific to permit testing without becoming caricatures of reality. The context in which the hypotheses are evaluated is important. Thus, while a case study will rarely substantiate the deductive logic of

---

[238] Karl W. Deutsch and Morton A. Kaplan, "The Limits of International Coalitions," in James N. Rosenau, ed., International Aspects of Civil Strife (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 72-73.
[239] Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (New York: Random House, 1979), Chapter 6.

the theory in all its aspects, the general thrust of the hypotheses should be validated.

Controlled comparisons can be made because the case studies selected are drawn from the pre-nuclear age. Pre-nuclear states have changed over the last two hundred years but not so much that they no longer admit of comparison with each other. Nuclear weapons have significantly changed the calculations that states make whether to commit aggression because, while intense conflicts of interest generate differing estimates of cost and value, the risks of devastation are equalized for all much more so than in the pre-nuclear age.[240] Controlled comparisons employ Mill's method-of-difference,[241] in which distinctive actor patterns of behavior (perceptual syndrome, affective abandonment, widespread loss aversion, and intentional clarity) differ from each other on the combined differences in values of the independent and intervening variables. Process-tracing, in which detailed history attempts to determine whether the causal process implied by theory generates the expected outcome, also provides a check that omitted variables that would invalidate the results are not relevant.[242] Finally, a loose version of structured-focused comparison is employed. The study is structured to inquire into the situational and dispositional dynamics under which both interstate cooperation and conflict in national security are most likely

---

[240] Betts, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Allison, Carnesale, and Nye, op. cit., p. 62.
[241] John Stuart Mill, A System of Logic: Ratrocination and Inductive (New York and London: Longmans, [1843] 1965).
[242] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), pp. 6-7, 50-51.

to occur. Hypotheses concern the intersection of balance and attitudinal consistency as mediated by concern with loss aversion. Nevertheless, the degree of concern for loss aversion has different taproots depending on whether cognitive or motivated biases predominate. Incorporating both biases in a single theory may somewhat violate the injunction that a single focus should guide the study.[243] But the interactionist theory developed here has policy implications. Such theories are likely to be multi-causal and somewhat less parsimonious than structural theories in which there is little room for leverage on the part of policy-makers.

This method of comparison casts the explanatory net sufficiently wide while at the same time delimits its domain. On the one hand, Waltz is certainly correct to argue that a theory that purports to explain everything ends up explaining nothing because it is as cumbersome as reality itself.[244] Sartori argues that conceptual stretching occurs when minimal realism incorporates assumptions and causal mechanisms from alternative paradigms without attempting to reconcile contradictions that result.[245] On the other hand, the call by Legro and Moravcsik to restrict the application of neorealist theory to only those instances in which high conflict is probable[246] is theoretically faulty because severe selection bias results. It is true that not all theories are beneficial in the

---

[243] George and Bennett, ibid., Chapter 3.
[244] Waltz, op. cit., Chapter 1.
[245] Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics," American Political Science Review, vol. 64, no. 4 (December 1970), pp. 1033-53.
[246] Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?" International Security, vol. 24, no. 2 (Autumn 1999), pp. 5-55.

same manner; some are good for prediction, but not explanation, and vice versa. Some theories are good for both explanation and prediction.[247] But the linkage between explanation and prediction has to turn, in part, on the frequency with which a particular phenomenon occurs. How much explanatory benefit do we get from a carefully constructed theory that is likely to be applicable under only the rarest of circumstances?[248] To take the rare for the usual is likely to bias our prescriptions. False analogies will be drawn if an event is merely an instance of what it resembles rather than a compelling correspondence.[249] If war occurs more often because of fear than from aggression, prescriptions to prevent war ought to be biased less towards deterrence models of aggression reduction than towards spiral models of anxiety reduction.

We can learn as much from analyzing cases in which peace rather than conflict predominates. Peaceful cases may be more difficult to analyze because they frequently involve instances that leave little in the way of observable evidence. Deterrence successes are difficult to prove because peace may occur, not because an actor has been deterred, but because it is satisfied with the status

---

[247] Stephen Toulmin, Foresight and Understanding (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), pp. 55-56, 108-11. Cited in Betts, "Conventional Deterrence," op. cit., p. 178.

[248] Slantchev concedes that this is a problem with his otherwise excellent self-enforcing equilibrium theory. See, Branislav L. Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment: The Concert of Europe as Self-Enforcing Equilibrium," Security Studies, vol. 14, no. 4 (2005), pp. 565-606.

[249] Jervis, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, op. cit., pp. 22-24.

quo and the expected value of a peaceful future.[250] Even when states contest with each other, peacetime diplomacy retains its necessary fluidity when states are able to re-align with each other during the opening stages of hostility in a timely manner in order to either gain or fend against a state with a bargaining advantage.[251] Demonstrating this is the task of the next chapter, which examines the 19th-century Concert of Europe in which widespread loss aversion that was mutually understood allowed peacetime diplomacy the necessary breathing room in which to operate.

[250] Jervis, "Review: Deterrence: Theory Revisited," World Politics, vol. 31, no. 2 (January 1979), p. 296.
[251] Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," op. cit., p. 189.

Chapter 2: Widespread Loss Aversion: The Attenuated Concert of Europe 1821-1853.

Because this dissertation argues that loss aversion is the common state of affairs in international relations, this chapter will examine a period that is not easily explained by realist (and neorealist) accounts. In its reduced cooperative state, the Concert of Europe from 1821-1853 should have become unstable and war-prone largely due to shocks in the form of small power revolts that might have led to system-wide war, but it was largely able to restore the 1815 settlement concluded after Napoleon's defeat. No war between the major powers occurred until the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854, although serious threats of war erupted.

Initially, self-conscious and close cooperation among the major powers was largely responsible for the Concert's peace and stability. Yet by 1822, Britain refused to take part in the diplomatic conferences that were crucial to sustaining the cooperation.[1] Foreign Secretary Canning famously regarded the breakdown

[1] The Treaty of the Aix-la-Chapelle added France to the Quadruple Alliance partners, the latter alliance of which was a holdover from the Napoleonic Wars. The Quadruple Alliance was secretly retained in order to balance against potential French revisionism. Britain left the forum of regularized conferences generally over the Treaty of the Holy Alliance in which Austria, Prussia, and Russia formalized their commitment to intervene in the affairs of others to stem revolts. The specific event for British withdrawal was the French restoration of the conservative Bourbon regime in Spain in 1822, which Canning was unable to prevent. See, René Albrect-Carrié, A Diplomatic History of Europe since the Congress of Vienna, rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); Charles K. Webster, The Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815 (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969); Mack Walker, ed., Metternich's Europe (New York: Walker and Company, 1968), p. 136.

of the Concert as "a wholesome state: every nation for itself and God for all!"[2] The Concert should easily have destroyed itself given the Greek revolt of a year earlier; the 1830 revolt in the United Netherlands and the subsequent creation of an independent Belgian state; the disposition of the Eastern Question regarding Turkey and the Ottoman Empire in 1831, and then in 1839; and the national revolutions of 1848 (the Italian revolt from Austrian dominance being the most likely to cause system-wide war).

These incidents can be characterized as short-term causes of war; that is, crises in the form of shocks which erupt with little forewarning. The Greek revolt and the larger Eastern Question did not fall under the purview of the 1815 settlement, thus their resolutions under most inauspicious circumstances provide least likely tests for the theory proposed here. Situated in the middle of the continent, the Belgian case naturally attracts the strategic interests of the major European powers, and thus is an important case in its own right. Italy is another hard case for widespread loss aversion due to the revolutionary ferment of the moment coupled with France's proximity to an increasingly poorly defended Austrian Empire. In several instances the status quo was changed (i.e., the creation of the independent states of Greece and Belgium), but only in order to retain the rest of the larger status quo. In other cases, the status quo was provisionally changed (i.e., the Ottoman Empire and Italy), but then largely restored after much hard bargaining by the major powers with threats of war.

---

[2] Irby Nichols, The European Pentarchy and the Congress of Vienna 1822 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971), p. 315.

To begin discussion, widespread loss aversion is situated along a continuum of interstate cooperation to include realism, its strongest theoretical competitor. Then, necessary conditions for the emergence of widespread loss aversion are examined, as are the specific dynamics to be tested. Each of the four important and representative case studies identified above are divided into two phases. This allows for an efficient comparison both of whether and how statesmen frame the situation in order to determine whether actors really do engage in loss aversion rather that expected utility maximization.[3]

Locating widespread loss aversion.

Along a continuum of the degree of interstate cooperation, widespread loss aversion situates itself between realism (and its offshoot neorealism) and liberal institutionalism, the latter two of which take state interests as given. In both latter cases, the interests largely remain the same (for realists states are relative gain maximizers and for liberal institutionalists states are absolute gain

[3] Specifically, we want to compare cases that differ on the degree of loss aversion. It is not simply that states are risk acceptant for loss, rather a correct comparison is that they are risk acceptant for loss to the same degree that they refrain from making gains similar in magnitude to the loss that they find unacceptable and instead prefer the status quo. By using within-case comparisons instead of across-case comparisons we are able to control for many relevant differences that can plague attempts that assume a high degree of correspondence between the cases other than differences in the independent variable to be tested. Nevertheless, it is important that differences in the degree of loss aversion reflect that variable and not differences in risk-taking because the utilities are different. See, Robert Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," Political Psychology, vol. 13, no. 2, Special Issue: Prospect Theory and Political Psychology (June 1992), p. 203.

maximizers),[4] but observable state behavior changes as incentives generated by changes in the environment change.[5] At the extreme pole of cooperative behavior lies constructivism in which ideas have independent status in determining an actor's material interests.[6] Although Schroeder argues that a transformation of European politics took place during the 19th century, I am in agreement with both Kraehe and Kagan that Schroeder's empirical account belies his thesis.[7] Thus, this chapter will not attempt a comparison with constructivist arguments. Rather, theoretical variants of interest-driven cooperation and conflict will be compared with each other.

Loss aversion by itself (absent a wide understanding that this is prevailing) is less cooperative than liberal institutionalism. Liberal

---

[4] For theoretical analyses see the following articles in David A. Baldwin, ed., Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism;" Duncan Snidal, "Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation;" and Robert Powell, "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory."

[5] Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds., The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

[6] There is the presumption in constructivism that increased cooperation produces more peaceful relations, but Finnemore offers the interesting possibility that bad ideas can just as easily socialize actors to engage in conflictual behavior. See, Martha Finnemore, National Interests in International Society (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), pp. 130-31.

[7] Paul W. Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics: 1763-1848 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Schroeder, "Did the Vienna Settlement Rest on a Balance of Power?" American Historical Review, vol. 97, no. 3 (January 1992), pp. 683-708; Enno E. Kraehe, "A Bipolar Balance of Power," AHR, ibid., pp. 707-715; Korina Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert: The Realist-Institutionalist Debate and Great Power Behavior in the Eastern Question, 1821-41," Security Studies, vol. 7, no. 2 (Winter 1997/98), pp. 1-57.

institutionalism, of which regime theory is prominent, argues that actors would more readily cooperate with each other were mechanisms devised that could provide reduced transaction costs to agreements, greater transparency of information, and detection of cheating on agreements.[8] But equally important as an impediment to cooperation is that states tend to overvalue what they have and are risk averse to making trades (such as territory or a reduction of arms) with others that disinterested third parties judge might benefit both sides.[9] This is particularly the case in security affairs more than in economic ones because trades that a state makes in the former realm that it later comes to regret can have serious implications for its survival if it is insufficiently defended against attack[10] or if it emboldens the gaining state to believe that the other can easily be coerced.

In its strongest form from 1815-1821 the Concert of Europe was at best a nascent security regime insofar as the incentives to cooperate were effected by changes in the environment even if the narrow interests of states were left little unchanged.[11] Nevertheless, even a small change in which state interests were somewhat broadened to include those of other states, as well as to have a longer run conception of cooperation other than an immediate exchange of benefits,

---

[8] Ronald H. Coase, "The Nature of the Firm," Econometrica N.S., vol. 4, issue 16 (November 1937), pp. 386-405; Oliver E. Williamson, The Economic Institutions of Captalism (New York: The Free Press, 1985).
[9] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 193.
[10] Charles Lipson. "International Cooperation in Economic and Security Affairs," World Politics, vol. 37, no. 1 (October 1984), pp. 1-23.
[11] Jervis, "From Balance to Concert: A Study of International Security Cooperation," in Kenneth A. Oye, ed., Cooperation Under Anarchy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 58, 78.

paid large dividends for the peace and stability that ensued.[12] Concerts in their strongest form are anomalous events in international relations given the implications of anarchy and the security dilemma discussed in the previous chapter. But, the system did not break down after interstate relations reverted to a more normal state of affairs and we must look for reasons as to why the status quo was largely maintained for some thirty more years.

Recent realist accounts provide an explanation by variously arguing that the Concert of Europe was a fiction;[13] that, as an institution, it was largely irrelevant to the cooperation that did emerge;[14] or that it provided sufficient transparency to allow straight-forward realpolitik diplomacy to make the deterrence of aggression largely successful, thus standing the liberal institutionalist argument on its head.[15] A common thread to these arguments is that rationality, read as utility maximization, has to prevail.[16] But if expected utility maximization is indifferent between gains and losses, on balance, we should see more aggressive behavior on the part of states if such aggression

---

[12] Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Stephen D. Krasner, ed., International Regimes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 180-81.
[13] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., pp. 1-57.
[14] Branislav L. Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment: The Concert of Europe as Self-Enforcing Equilibrium," Security Studies, vol. 14, no. 4 (2005), pp. 565-606; Christopher Layne, "Lord Palmerston and the Triumph of Realism: Anglo-French Relations, 1830-48," in Miriam Fendius Elman, ed., Paths to Peace: Is Democracy the Answer? (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), pp. 61-100.
[15] Dan Lindley, Promoting Peace with Information: Transparency as a Tool of Security Regimes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).
[16] Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 566; Andrew Schotter, The Economic Theory of Social Institutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Randall L. Calvert, "Rational Actors, Equilibrium, and Social Institutions," (mimeo, University of Rochester, 1998).

brings benefits in excess of costs.[17] That a number of cases that will be examined demonstrate restraint on the part of satisfied states when further gains might have been profitable is perplexing. So are instances in which aggression or threats of aggression occur that do not seem to be profitable from a cost-benefit standpoint. These various realist explanations for such perplexing behavior resort to the idiosyncratic character of major foreign policy statesmen[18] or domestic-level arguments for a realist foreign policy.[19] But it is argued here that widespread loss aversion that was recognized and respected by the major European powers provided more restraint against opportunism than realist accounts that are predicated on expected utility maximization can explain and predict. This relative self-restraint can be parsimoniously explained by rationally consistent interstate relations that are also risk-acceptant for loss but risk averse for gain. We should not see the level of cooperation predicted by liberal

---

[17] Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 196.
[18] Matthew Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," Security Studies, vol. 9, no. 4 (Summer 2000), pp. 52-60.
[19] Incorporating domestic-level arguments in realist theory has recently been coined 'neoclassical realism,' in which status-quo, and revisionist, intentions, respectively, are crucial to an explanation of a state's foreign policy in addition to system-level effects of anarchy and the security dilemma. For examples see, Stephen M. Walt, The Origins of Alliances (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); Benjamin Miller, When Opponents Cooperate: Great Power Conflict and Collaboration in World Politics (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); Layne, "Lord Palmerston and the Triumph of Realism," in Fendius Elman, ed., op. cit., pp. 61-100; Randall L. Schweller, Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," (paper presented at the 1997 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C.).

institutionalism, on the one hand, but we should also not see the more predatory degree of conflict that has to be allowed by realism, on the other hand.

Further specification of the dynamics of widespread loss aversion situates it, on the one hand, between a variant of balance theory, in which the security threats throughout the system are diffuse, and, on the other hand, the automatic version of balance-of-power theory, in which states that cooperate to defeat a third party threat realign with the defeated state in order that a former ally not steal a march on the other if it gains inordinately.[20] In the balance theory version, adversaries on one issue are allies on another issue; thus states reconcile their differences with each other through moderate solutions that are amenable to all. In the most optimistic form, states compete with each other to get in the good graces of the recently defeated adversary in order to prevail on other issues in which they will need support.[21] Such dynamics are possible, but there can be no significant alignment handicaps due to antithetical ideologies or visceral hatred. Reality is seldom that pristine. In the case of the Concert of Europe, Britain, at different times variously allied with, restrained, let it be known to others that it would fail to restrain, and balanced against, the recently defeated France.

---

[20] For the assumptions and implications of balance-of-power theory see Jervis, "From Balance to Concert," in Oye, ed., op. cit., pp. 58-79.
[21] Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Paul Lauren, ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: Free Press, 1979), p. 224.

Schroeder's insight that alliances can be tools of control is important here.[22] Because Russia feared that France continued to be the seedbed of revolutionary activity, it was loath to ally with the latter and consistently advocated a permanent hostile alliance (against which Britain under Foreign Secretary Palmerston wisely demurred) until the Concert broke down.[23] Thus, at times when it was at odds with Britain and Russia, France had to try to line up support for its individualistic policies with Austria and Prussia, two states which also largely distrusted French intentions and motives. The automatic balance-of-power version fails for the same reason because France, while useful at times to Britain and Austria for tactical diplomatic reasons, was largely perpetually balanced against, both tacitly and overtly during the Concert period.

What general dynamics should we then expect of widespread loss aversion? On the one hand, there has to be an incentive for the major powers to try to refrain from individualistic policies in order to achieve security and to engage each other multilaterally in order to attempt to achieve a degree of mutual security. On the other hand, cooperation has to be conditional on the continued respect by others for the state's interests. Thus, while the state will not take advantage of another state's temporary weakness by exploiting it, it will also not allow the fact of distress to become a cover for the other state to make

---

[22] Schroeder, "Alliances, 1815-1914: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management," in Klaus Knorr, ed., Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1976), pp. 227-62.
[23] Kenneth Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 39-40.

aggrandizing gains in its effort to restore order. Furthermore, although it may not wish to add to the misery of the temporarily weak major power, the state will not go out of its way to rectify the latter's problems. For instance, Britain and France could dissuade Russia from intervening on behalf of the United Netherlands to prevent the secession of Belgium, but they could not compel Russia to aid in coercive measures to ensure that Belgium become an independent state. In addition, major powers should not actively incite revolution or unrest in another major state or in that other state's recognized sphere of influence. But, respect and a measure of defense for the interests of small powers precludes the system from devolving into a two-tier cooperative balance-of-power[24] if it is believed that revolts and system-wide war can cause each other. In an interesting case to be discussed later, Britain let Austria know that it could not restrain France from coming to the aid of Italy were Italy to be humiliated completely after its revolts, thus guaranteeing that system-wide war would ensue should Austria not exercise a measure of self-restraint.

Necessary conditions for the emergence of widespread loss aversion.

A number of necessary conditions must be present for the general dynamics of widespread loss aversion to be attractive as an interactionist strategy. First, the major states must largely be satisfied with the status quo and they must know

[24] Betts briefly suggests this as an assessment of the Concert of Europe. See, Richard K. Betts, "Collective Security and Arms Control in the New Europe," in Betts, ed., Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1994), pp. 462-63.

that all feel similarly and that others know that they feel this way and so on.[25] In criticizing this theoretical argument made by Jervis on behalf of a Concert, Slantchev argues that this is an inordinately demanding coordination task.[26] But, the second necessary condition relates to the status of military technology and can at least provide states with incentives to engage in sustained communication with each other in order to determine whether they feel similarly and how they might go about maintaining the status quo.[27] Specifically, the defense cannot be so dominant (or believed to be so dominant) and distinguishable from the offense that states prefer to go their own way. This was the case during the inter-

---

[25] Jervis, "A Political Science Perspective on the Balance of Power and the Concert," AHR, vol. 97, no. 3 (June 1992), pp. 716-724, 719; Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Krasner, ed., op. cit., pp. 176-77.

[26] Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., pp. 575-76.

[27] Because of anarchy and the security dilemma, states that are satisfied with the status quo are not necessarily able to maintain it without coming to some agreement as to how to imperfectly achieve it. Cooperative solutions may not obtain, not because states are revisionist, but rather because some status quo states are incorrectly perceived by other status quo states as being aggressive when, in fact, they are acting out of insecurity. This is the major problem with Slantchev's self-enforcing equilibrium argument to explain peace and stability during the Concert period in which he argues that the rules and incentives for enforcement must be endogenous. As a consequence, there seems to be no difference between short-run, and long-run, state interests, respectively. But, as Jervis shows, this is precisely the problem that systemic theories grapple with. In dynamics that reflect the Prisoner's Dilemma, the first choice of the state is to defect while others cooperate, the second choice is for all to cooperate, the third choice is for mutual defection, and the last choice is to cooperate while others defect. Without explicit communication and techniques to iterate plays of the game, the suboptimal choice of mutual defection obtains with disaster for all. Thus, short-run, and long-run, state interests, respectively, are not identical and must somehow be harmonized, if only imperfectly, which will not occur if the rules of the game can only be endogenous. See, Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., pp. 567-72; Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Krasner, ed., op. cit., pp. 185-87; Jervis, "From Balance to Concert," in Oye, ed., op. cit., pp. 64-73.

war period when buck-passing took place because states believed that they did not need to assist other defensively minded states.[28] The result was that weaker states were initially picked off seriatim by the Nazis until a defensive stand was belatedly taken. At the other extreme, the offense cannot be so dominant (or believed to be so dominant) and indistinguishable from the defense that there is little possibility of distinguishing the military policies of status quo states from the military policies of revisionist states. In such cases, states engage in chain-ganging behavior, which is largely individualistic because there is no attempt to determine whether states are status quo or revisionist, but rather to unconditionally join one's allies in order to be on the winning side because war is deemed to be inevitable.[29] The run-up to the First World War is held to be the paradigmatic example of chain-ganging. The choice does not become whether to go to war to make gains or to refrain from attack in the hope that peace can be preserved, but rather to become the sure victim of attack in the near future if one does not move first.

Van Evera argues that defense dominance allows security dynamics that were formerly thought to be independent, but are actually related, to be naturally realized. Specifically, he argues that defense dominance reduces the incentive for states to engage in opportunistic expansionism; reduces the incentive for status quo states to engage in defensive expansionism; reduces the

---

[28] Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," International Organization, vol. 44, no. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 137-68.
[29] Christensen and Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks," ibid., pp. 137-68.

incentive for states to fiercely resist expansion; reduces the incentive for states to be first movers in order to be secure; reduces the incentive for states to take advantage of closing windows of opportunity through preventive, and preemptive, war, respectively; reduces the incentive for states to engage in fait accomplis; and reduces the incentive for states to fail to negotiate and to reach agreements the terms of which can only be positively verified.[30] But these dynamics are not naturally realized as the dynamics of buck-passing detailed above show.

There must be enough uncertainty (although not debilitating as the chain-ganging dynamic shows) regarding the dispositional and situational mix that gives rise to particular state behavior to generate the proper incentives for the major powers to eschew individualistic policies in order to take a chance that multilateral policies can keep the peace. Mutual cooperation is possible, but not easy, when offensive and defensive weapons and policies are distinguishable but the former have an advantage, or when offensive and defensive weapons and policies are indistinguishable although the defense has an advantage.[31] Under these two possible configurations, individualistic polices are likely to be costly, but following mutual policies will not be disastrous should one become the victim of attack because there is a strong expectation of support from others to

[30] Stephen Van Evera, "Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War," International Security, vol. 22, no. 4 (Spring, 1998), pp. 5-43.
[31] Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Krasner, ed., op. cit., p. 178.

punish the aggression. Security is possible, but only if mutual security obtains.[32] Thus, states expand their narrow conception of self-interest to invest somewhat in the security of others.[33]

The last two necessary conditions are that states cannot believe that individualistic policies can only provide for their security and that war must be seen as being very costly.[34] These two conditions are taken in turn. If the dynamics of prospect theory are correct, states should adopt individualistic policies largely because they fear that they will sustain significant losses if they do not, not in order to make opportunistic gains. Understanding that this is the case should give states an incentive to make sure that others are not excessively humiliated in defeat or left insecure. Sustained interaction should do a better job of determining a state's motives than merely presuming that aggression for gain is the cause of its behavior. Moreover, by giving the state an alternative to individualistic aggression in order to achieve security by offering it an expectation of support should it find itself in a situation of temporary distress, the motives of a potentially fearful state can be ameliorated.

A state's self-interest can be made longer run than is usually the case when the exchange of concessions between states is not so fine-grained. Van Evera argues that defense dominance achieves this because material disadvantages do not translate into strategic security disadvantages if resources

---

[32] Jervis, "From Balance to Concert," in Oye, ed., op. cit., pp. 69-73.
[33] Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Krasner, ed., op. cit., p. 180.
[34] Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Krasner, ed., op. cit., pp. 177-78.

are less usable for offense. In contrast, "resources are more cumulative when conquest is easy. The ability to conquer others and to defend oneself is more elastic to one's control over strategic areas and resources. As a result, gains are more additive—states can parlay small conquests into larger ones—and losses are less reversible."[35] This is true, but what may be more important is the inference that others draw when a concession is given. At the extreme, a state that is believed to have no choice in making concessions is also not believed to be able to stand up for its vital interests and therefore is likely to be easily coercible.[36] Such inferences will not be drawn if it is known that those who take unfair advantage of another state's concession will be punished by third, and fourth, parties, respectively. The expectation that such punishment will materialize diminishes the incentive that states have to take advantage of others.[37]

Finally, system-wide war and revolution must be seen as costly for all and mutually causal. Major powers differently situated, largely due to geography and regime type, will have different estimates of the likelihood of such contagion. Britain, and to a degree, France, championed non-intervention in the affairs of states and were generally supportive of liberal revolutions whereas the autocratic states of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, the last in particular, felt the need to intervene in the affairs of its neighbors to crush revolts in their infancy.

---

[35] Van Evera, "Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War," op. cit., p. 8.
[36] Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Krasner, ed., op. cit., pp. 182-83.
[37] Jervis, "From Balance to Concert," in Oye, ed., op. cit., pp. 70-73.

But, the attitudes of the major powers were more consistent with each other than is normally the case because Britain did fear radicalism. [38] Moreover, Palmerston was circumspect enough to realize when a revolution had gone too far to be contained without system-wide war (and the revolt thus needed to be both recognized and legitimized with independence) and when intervention in a revolt was necessary to preclude the eruption of system-wide war. To different degrees the major powers did not fear retaliation from another state if it engaged in aggression; rather they feared that a neighboring state might suffer a revolt with the attendant contagion effects.[39] Even a victorious state might suffer a revolution due to unrest as a consequence of victory.

The nature of military weaponry and policy were somewhat ambiguous at the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars. Thus the major powers had the necessary incentives detailed above to engage in widespread loss aversion. Of particular importance was the demobilization of large standing national armies because such demobilization contributed to defense dominance.[40] Liberal states feared despotism while autocratic states feared unrest and revolution because large

---

[38] Jervis, "From Balance to Concert," in Oye, ed., op. cit., p. 65; Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," World Politics, vol. 30, no. 2 (January 1978), p. 169; Alan Sked, "Metternich's Enemies or the Threat from Below, " in Sked., ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848 (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 164-89.
[39] Jervis, "From Balance to Concert," in Oye, ed., op. cit., p. 65.
[40] George Quester, Offense and Defense in the International System (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977), pp. 73-74; Michael Howard, War in European History (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 95-95.

standing armies required and fostered popular rule.[41] Nevertheless, Van Evera argues that the ability to interfere in the affairs of a neighboring state can be seen as an offensive policy tool,[42] while Jervis argues that the liberal states increasingly fell out with the autocratic states over the period of the Concert because intervention by the latter was increasingly viewed by the former as being a cover for aggrandizement.[43] Because major war was seen as being too costly and this was recognized by all, such cheating at the margin should not be unexpected as states can believe that others have no choice but to cooperate even as they occasionally defect. But threats of war in order to restore the cooperative equilibrium largely had the effect of ensuring that all understood that fragile peace rested on conditionally good state behavior. Thus, the possibility of system-wide war limited the lengths that states were willing to go to make individualistic gains.[44]

---

[41] Van Evera, "Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War," op. cit., p. 17.
[42] Van Evera, "Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War," op. cit., pp. 7-9.
[43] Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Krasner, ed., op. cit., p. 184. The theoretical thrust of the argument is correct, but the diplomatic record demonstrates an increasing preference on the part of Palmerston to deal with revolts in a more interventionist and less liberal fashion. For instance, during the 1848 revolts the liberal Kossuth government appealed for British intervention in Hungary's effort to secede from Austria, but Palmerston stated that he had no knowledge of Hungary other than as part of the Austrian Empire. Moreover, Palmerston instructed the Russians to put down the revolt as quickly as possible. See, Charles Sproxton, Palmerston and the Hungarian Revolution (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1919), p. 46; E. Ann Pottinger Saab, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance (Charlottsville: University of Virginia Press, 1977), p. 8.
[44] This dynamic inverts Glenn Snyder's stability-instability paradox. Presumed stability at the highest level of deterrence gives states some expectation that risky behaviors can be taken at lower levels of conflict. But if the cooperative equilibrium is tenuous, defecting individualistic behavior risks destroying the

Specific dynamics of widespread loss aversion.

Because all of the major powers are satisfied with the status quo even if they are differentially secure, states recognize that their interests are positively interdependent. Because war is deemed not likely, but only because all take care not to provoke it, there should be an overriding interest in framing incidents which arise as the consequence of shocks to the system with a view to keeping the peace rather than mitigating losses because war is deemed possible. Therefore, states recognize that concessions need to be made in order to keep the peace. As argued in the previous chapter, in this case the insurance premium is accepted as a sure but small loss instead of being viewed as the cost of conducting a risky foreign policy in order to ensure that no loss occurs. The conservative view of the insurance premium largely takes place when one concedes the advantage of the unilateral initiative and instead solicits multilateral action even when dealing with a revolt within one's recognized sphere of influence. Unilateral action is then only taken in order to stem certain losses should multilateral action not materialize. (These dynamics should operate even more strongly in areas where particular state influence is contested.) Restoration of the status quo is the objective and any additional gains that are

---

whole edifice. The knowledge that such consequences are possible induces actors to be restrained in their individualistic behavior. At the domestic level of analysis, this is the main thrust of Lijphart's concept of consociationalism in keeping multiethnic states from breaking apart. See, Glenn Snyder, "The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror," in Paul Seabury, ed., The Balance of Power (San Francisco: Chandler, 1965); Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," World Politics, vol. 21, no. 2 (January 1969), pp. 207-25.

made as the consequence of unilateral action should not be sought, even less so in contested areas. Even if gains are made almost by accident they should not be retained if others subsequently object that they are being taken advantage of.[45]

By adhering to the belief that states will mutually support each other when temporary weakness is experienced (there will be no runs on the bank), states are not so wedded to a strict interpretation of the endowment effect. They will make concessions in the reasonable certainty that the peace will hold (or that system-wide war will not eventuate). Because states believe that their security critically depends on the security of others, the endowment effect can be broadened to include the necessary bundles of goods (territory, strategic resources, and prestige) in the possession of other states that give the latter the belief that they are secure. Taken to the extreme, my cession of goods to others that benefits them more than their loss harms me raises the general level of endowment to be enjoyed by all.

Because it is recognized that not all states are equally secure, the less secure ones will tend to frame incidents with a view to using the insurance premium in risky fashion in order to take unilateral action to achieve their

---

[45] We should expect this sequence of actions to take place because free-riding on collective action problems can occur when multilateral action is requested. Moreover, prospect theory argues that states will be reluctant to escalate the level of violence in limited conflict situations in order to make gains but will only do so when failing to do so will bring a significant deterioration in the status quo. By such time, a significant amount of violence may be needed to restore the status quo which third parties will mistake as an effort to unilaterally change the status quo in order to make gains. These arguments are adaptations of the dynamics in Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," op. cit., p. 194.

security. But by guaranteeing their security, the more secure states can ameliorate the need for the less secure to take risky actions. The variety of alliance tools alluded to above can point the way for the less secure to return to the cooperative fold without the fear that they are taking significant risks that they will be taken advantage of. By providing a safety net, states can mutually invest in security arrangements that, while not promising certainty, significantly reduce the probability that a state will be left without allies in case it suffers aggression.[46] This is not all sweetness and light. Brute threats of war may be needed to make an intransigent state realize that its policy position is untenable. Moreover, all of the major powers must be vigilant in defending their interests at the international level even as they take account of the legitimate interests of others. Resort to isolationism by an important state that collapses a security guarantee for others has the effect of destabilizing the system because the less secure then can only ensure their security if others that they have long-standing conflicts with are made insecure.[47] Instead of the positive interdependence that

---

[46] More formally, the certainty principle (or the non-linear response to probabilities) characteristic of prospect theory becomes less certain and more linear when states have an expectation of aid should they find themselves threatened by an aggressor state. Refer to Chapter 1 of this dissertation for discussion of the insurance premium, endowment effect, and certainty principle.

[47] One variant toward increasing isolationism is delegating the responsibility for managing conflicts to other major powers and failing to be actively involved in the mediating diplomacy. Jack Snyder has a complex view of Palmerston whom he believes was preparing Britain for a liberal imperialist policy (that of deflecting class hatreds domestically by venting them abroad) by the time of the Crimean War. This policy dovetailed with Britain's move toward 'splendid isolation' and lack of interest in participating in mediating diplomacy. Nevertheless, during the Greek and Belgian crises, Palmerston's view was

contributes to mutual security, mutual insecurity results when states view their relations as being negatively interdependent. Individualistic solutions must then be found in order to attain security.

Four case studies beginning with the Greek revolt of 1821.

The Danubian (Romanian) principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia found themselves in revolt as Greek Christians took up against their Muslim Turkish rulers. Thousands of Turks in southern Greece were killed and reprisals against Christians took place to include the sacrilegious murder of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople on Easter Sunday on church property. In addition, the Turks violated Russian shipping rights and continued to be in violation of an 1812 Russo-Turkish treaty.

In the first phase of the crisis from 1821-25, Russia, under Tsar Alexander I, was keenly interested in protecting its fellow Christians in an area that was largely respected by the major powers as being within Russia's sphere of influence.[48] Russia was the only state initially willing to intercede. Austria, Britain, and France allowed that Russia had a right to enforce its bilateral treaties with Turkey, although the Greek question required their consultation and

---

similar to that of Canning: to develop good liberal policies abroad. See, Snyder, Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), Chapter 5, especially p. 196.

[48] Barbara B. Jelavich, Russia's Balkan Entanglement 1806-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 58-59; M.S. Anderson, "Russia and the Eastern Question," in Sked, ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848, op. cit., p. 80; Patricia Kennedy Grimstead, The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I: Attitude and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 262-63.

assent.[49] Nevertheless, it has recently been argued that Britain and Russia were dual hegemonies in Europe. Thus, from a distribution of capabilities standpoint, Russia might have done what it pleased regarding this crisis and there was not much the other powers (except Britain) could do save plead for Russian self-restraint.[50] Britain and Russia were neither allies nor open enemies; they enjoyed fairly good but not intimate relations.[51] Perhaps Britain might have vigorously opposed Russia but it did little more than threaten neutrality while Austria withheld moral support for the Russian position.[52] In explaining why Britain did not simply make Greece a bulwark against Russian expansion, Canning stated, "that would be a proper argument for English policy, but what language could we hold to Russia to obtain her consent, knowing as we do that she can conquer Greece and Turkey when she pleases?"[53]

Alexander was interested in multilateral diplomacy to quell the violence and he lobbied for five years to bring the other major powers on board. This poses a problem for realism in that Alexander might easily have made unilateral gains by promoting and securing Greek independence as the benefits appeared

---

[49] Evidence summarized in Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., p. 62.
[50] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., pp. 614-21; Kraehe, "A Bipolar Balance of Power," AHR, op. cit., pp. 707-715; Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., pp. 576-77, 585-86.
[51] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., p. 617.
[52] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., pp. 617-19; Henry Kissinger, A World Restored (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964), pp. 287-89.
[53] C.W. Crawley, The Question of Greek Independence (New York: Fertig, 1973), p. 35. Cited in Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., p. 62.

to outweigh the costs. At the time it was not believed that Turkey could successfully oppose Russia militarily[54] and the other major powers were dilatory in intervening to resolve the crisis. The Russian foreign minister Capodistrias told Alexander, "Your majesty, once on the Danube, will resolve without effort the fate of the Levant."[55]

Britain and Austria had an interest in seeing the Greek revolt die out because they wished to see Turkey preserved as a bulwark against potential Russian expansion. Moreover, Metternich, the Austrian foreign minister, feared contagion from revolution in the Balkans.[56] Yet, the two states could not coordinate their opinions. Canning and the earlier British foreign minister Castlereagh both severely mistrusted Metternich's motives as the latter repeatedly attempted to make Vienna the diplomatic capital of the Concert.[57] France was looking to make gains in the Levant and vacillated between supporting British/Austrian opinions and offering a bilateral deal with Russia to make gains should Greece successfully secede from Turkish rule.[58]

---

[54] Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., p. 52-60.
[55] Cited in Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., p. 62.
[56] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., p. 26.
[57] Alexander is considered the pre-eminent Concert statesman while Metternich frequently engaged in self-serving diplomacy. Although status quo, Austria was an insecure state and was prone to taking risky actions in the form of fait accomplis in order to maintain its security. On these views see, Schroeder, Metternich's Diplomacy at its Zenith (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), pp. 251-66; Anderson, "Russia and the Eastern Question," in Sked, ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848, op. cit., p. 82.
[58] F. Roy Bridge, "Allied Diplomacy in Peacetime: the Failure of the Congress 'System'," in Sked, ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848, op. cit., p. 46.

That Alexander had a brief interest but ultimately refused to make a Russo-French bargain in favor of multilateral diplomacy gives good evidence that Russia framed the crisis as one of peacefully attempting to maintain the status quo rather than attempting to make gains equal in value to the losses it might have sustained had Turkish atrocities against the co-religionist Greeks been permitted to continue with the risks of civil unrest elsewhere.[59] Nevertheless, Alexander became increasingly frustrated with Britain and Austria. Two ambassadorial conferences were sponsored in St. Petersburg, but they produced no allied action regarding the disposition of Greece.[60] A 1924 Russian offer to create three autonomous Greek principalities was perceived by Britain and Austria to give Russia predominant influence in the Balkans. It was feared that the three areas would become Russian satellites.[61] There is evidence that Alexander was reaching the limits of his patience with the other major powers and decided on war with Turkey in spring of 1826.[62] Thus, Russian

---

[59]Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., p. 60. Lindley argues that Castlereagh, and Metternich, separately, exaggerated the threat of revolution in meetings with Alexander in order to serve their interests in propping up Turkey by quashing the Greek revolt. See, Lindley, Promoting Peace with Information, op. cit., pp. 72-75. But, instead of arguing that Alexander was inordinately gullible, this dynamic is to be expected by prospect theory as the tsar increasingly found his multilateral strategy to be failing without a more determined unilateral initiative on his part.

[60] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., pp. 28-29.

[61] Jelavich, Russia's Balkan Entanglement, op. cit., pp. 61, 66-67; Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., p. 29.

[62] Robert W. Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 108; Loyal Cowles, "The Failure to Restrain Russia: Canning, Nesselrode, and the Greek Question, 1825-1827," International History Review, vol. 12, no. 4 (November 1990), p. 703.

framing of the situation, British/Austrian obstruction, and largely unwarranted suspicions are expected by the dynamics of widespread loss aversion.

Nicholas I, who succeeded Alexander after the latter's unexpected death in 1825, was less willing to sacrifice Russian interests for the sake of the Concert than was his predecessor. In the second phase of the crisis from 1826-29, Nicholas intervened to aid the Greeks. Over British objections Russia took some gains under the Treaty of Akkerman, which gave Russia preferred positions in the Caucasus and the Danubian Principalities.[63] In essence, Russia had done little more than restore the status quo, but its unilateral action to achieve this outcome forced the other major powers to become active in resolving the Greek question, which is expected by our theory. The 1826 St. Petersburg Protocol between Russia and Britain, which added France as a signatory to the Treaty of London the following year, promoted Greek autonomy. An autonomous vassal Greece was created and an armistice was imposed should Wallachia and Moldavia fail to comply. Because of confusion, the armistice was enforced with the unfortunate sinking of the Turko-Egyptian navy at Navarino, the effect of which hardened Turkey toward any accommodation with Greece. The Turkish Sultan Mahmud declared war on Russia and although the Russian military performed poorly it was ultimately able to secure a victory in which the Sultan acceded to the Treaty of Adrianople.[64] Before this conclusion was reached, a dangerous situation

---

[63] Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 593.
[64] Albrect-Carrié, A Diplomatic History of Europe since the Congress of Vienna, op. cit., p. 47.

occurred, which had the potential of escalating the war to a system-wide one. In 1829, Russia was poised to take Constantinople, but the British and the French navies operating in the Mediterranean were dispatched to the Dardanelles, and they asked Turkey for permission to enter, in order to protect the city. Yet, Russia did not press its advantage and stopped short of securing its victory, thus averting a military clash between the three major powers.[65]

The Treaty of Adrianople affirmed provisions of the Treaty of London and an independent Greek state came into being headed by a ruler independent of the three signatories. Russia limited its war effort in deference to British and French interests. Moreover, the Russian peace terms were moderate; they took small territorial gains and kept Turkey intact in continued control of Constantinople and the Straits. Finally, Russia did not incite Balkan Christians to revolt against Turkey, an act that would have threatened Austria as well.[66] Although Russia, Britain, and France formally agreed to refrain from taking unilateral advantage in the newly formed Greece, Kagan argues that it became an arena of acute major power rivalry. As evidence, the three states balanced each other: Britain allowed France the authority to supervise the withdrawal of Turkish troops in order to deny Russia exclusive territorial gains.[67] Moreover, Britain and Russia cooperated with each other to the exclusion of Austria, thus

---

[65] G.D. Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question: Missolonghi to Gallipoli (London: University of London Press, 1971), p. 55.
[66] Jelavich, Russia's Balkan Entanglement, op. cit., p. 85; Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., pp. 74-75.
[67] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., pp. 35-36.

excluding Metternich, whom Kagan strangely regards as the keeper of Concert norms.[68] This position is hardly tenable given the previously noted predilection of Metternich to force fait accomplis in disregard of the other major powers' interests.[69] Moreover, the details of competition between the signatories miss the more important point that the major powers were able to manage, relatively peaceably, a shock to the system that might have destroyed the Concert in a territory not contemplated by, nor within the purview of, the 1815 settlement.[70]

The second phase of the crisis is largely in accord with the expected dynamics of widespread loss aversion. Alexander finally decided to intervene in the spring of 1826 to protect the Greek Christians as he feared that continued Turkish repression was exacerbating revolutionary sentiment elsewhere.[71] Although he was not in favor of the revolt, Alexander also did not wish to see the Greeks extirpated by the Turks. It is perhaps unfortunate that Nicholas later took small gains as part of compensation for intervening on behalf of the Greeks (prospect theory does not deny that this is possible), but his actions had the salutary effect of forcing the French and British to work multilaterally with Russia to resolve the crisis. Moreover, Russia might have made much more in the way of opportunistic gains, but was restrained in its actions because the rest of the status quo was restored by carving out independence for Greece. As

---

[68] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., p. 36.
[69] Schroeder, Metternich's Diplomacy at its Zenith, op. cit., pp. 251-66.
[70] This is Rendall's criticism of Kagan's analysis. See, Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., p. 66; Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 572.
[71] Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., p. 60.

evidence, Russia's strategic interest in the Ottoman Empire made it tempting to use the Greek revolt as a pretext for settling its other objections to Turkish violations of the 1812 Russo-Turkish treaty. Although Nesselrode, the Russian foreign minister, conveyed to the Russian representative in Constantinople that these demands might be attached should Turkey become intransigent on the Greek issue,[72] Russia had little interest in materially changing its relationship with the Ottoman Empire. Russia found the Ottoman Empire to be more useful as a dysfunctional divided-against-itself frontier than as a partitioned area in which Britain and France might make greater gains and achieve greater influence at Russia's expense.[73]

The Belgian revolt of 1830.

The 1815 settlement added Belgium to Holland, thus creating the United Netherlands, which served as a buffer against potential French revisionism. Nevertheless, the Belgians long resented the heavy-handed treatment of Dutch rule and the revolt was a contagion from the July Revolution in France that deposed Charles X and brought Louis-Phillipe, the citizen king, to the throne. Moreover, because of ideological similarity and culture, the Belgians and the French were natural allies. In consequence, the Dutch asked all of the major powers except France for aid in putting down the insurrection. Palmerston

---

[72] Cowles, "The Failure to Restrain Russia," op. cit., pp. 707-08; Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., pp. 32-33.
[73] F. Roy Bridge and Roger Bullen, The Great Powers and the European States System 1815-1914 (London: Longman, 1980), p. 55; Rendall, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," op. cit., pp. 83-84.

believed that the revolt had gone too far to be contained and he did not wish to see the major powers intervening militarily in the Low Countries, an area of historic strategic importance to British security.[74] He recognized the stubbornness that major powers evince in leaving a contested area after a crisis has been resolved.[75] At the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, both Castlereagh and Metternich became the architects of the United Netherlands when they feared that France and Russia might conclude a separate alliance.[76] Thus, the presence of a strong United Netherlands as a bulwark against France continued to be British policy and Palmerston privately regretted the Belgian revolt despite his general support for constitutional regimes.[77]

In the first phase of the crisis, Palmerston framed the situation as one in which he wished to maintain the status quo peaceably, but could do so if the insurance premium was used in conservative fashion to accept the small, but sure, loss of a United Netherlands.[78] As detailed below, the Belgian revolt could

---

[74] Herbert C.F. Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 1 (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1966), p. 119; Layne, "Lord Palmerston and the Triumph of Realism," in Fendius Elman, ed., op. cit., pp. 78-81.
[75] Bridge and Bullen, The Great Powers and the European States System 1815-1914, op. cit., p. 52.
[76] Kraehe, "A Bipolar Balance of Power," op. cit., p. 710.
[77] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., pp. 29-33.
[78] It has been argued that Palmerston was looking to make gains by reducing the economic power of the United Netherlands (a competitor to British trade) by detaching Belgium. As noted above, this view is belied by Palmerston's belief that continued union of the Low Countries as a hedge against French revisionism was in all of Europe's interest and his regret that this was no longer possible. For the former minority viewpoint, see, Heinrich Ritter von Srbik, Metternich: der Staatsman und der Mensch, vol. 1 (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1925), p. 659. Cited in Gordon Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in C.P.T.

easily spread to system-wide war without his firm diplomatic hand. Palmerston needed to align with France in order to dissuade Russia and Prussia from intervening to restore Belgium to the Dutch King William. But, the British were both suspicious of the French if the Belgians gravitated toward them, as well as of a westward expansion of Prussia.[79] Moreover, in allying with France to prevent Prussian aggrandizement, Palmerston had to reassure the other major powers that diminution of the Dutch cordon against French revanchism could be compensated for by Britain giving France a security guarantee, which, in effect, was a security guarantee for all of Europe. As he would later do during the 1848 revolutions, Palmerston offered to restrain Europe from attacking France were France to refrain from attacking Europe.[80] This offer was credible as Britain (and possibly Russia) was the only state that might achieve its security without help from others.[81] Because the other major powers relied on others to gain their

---

Bury, ed., The New Cambridge Modern History, vol. 10: The Zenith of European Power 1830-70 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 248. For the latter majority viewpoint, see, Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 119; Jasper Ridley, Lord Palmerston (London: Constable & Co., 1970), p. 127.

[79] Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 594.

[80] Clive H. Church, Europe in 1830: Revolution and Political Change (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), p. 182; Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1 (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), pp. 93-103.

[81] In 1815 Britain found itself financially unscathed while Russia was at the peak of its military buildup but only with British subsidies and foreign enlistments. See, Kraehe, "A Bipolar Balance of Power," op. cit., p. 707. France was a second-rank power, Austria a third-rank power and Prussia even less so. See, Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 571.

security, Palmerston could credibly use his trademark belligerent diplomacy through threats of general war to keep French revisionism in check.[82]

A bit of luck was needed during the crisis and Palmerston found it in the contemporaneous revolts in the Polish provinces to which Russia and Austria had to attend. Because they were preoccupied with their own problems, Palmerston was able to secure the assent of the eastern powers at a London conference for Belgium's independence. Lindley correctly argues that all of the major powers were more fearful of intervention leading to system-wide war than they were of revolution and thus they largely framed the crisis much in the way as Britain had. Remembering French aggression, the whole of Europe feared French intervention. In turn, France feared British or Prussian intervention; Russia mobilized forces for intervention but would not do so without Prussian assent for territorial access which France indicated that it would militarily oppose.[83]

The logistics of demarcating Belgium's borders, installing a ruler, demolishing border forts along the French-Belgian border, and forcing the Dutch

---

[82] Webster has nothing but praise for Palmerston as a statesman, whereas Schroeder takes an opposite view. Layne finds Palmerston to be an impeccable liberal given to forceful realist diplomacy. Jack Snyder's view of Palmerston is summarized at fn. 47. See, Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 2 (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), pp. 595, 784-85, 789-92; Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain and the Crimean War: The Destruction of the European Concert (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), Chapter 16; Layne, "Lord Palmerston and the Triumph of Realism," in Fendius Elman, ed., op. cit., p. 97; Jack Snyder, Myths of Empire, op. cit., p. 196.

[83] Lindley, Promoting Peace with Information, op. cit., pp. 75-76; Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 594.

to accept the conference's decisions preoccupied Palmerston. Not surprisingly, for its restrained behavior and improved resolution of the Polish insurrections, the result of the latter which was to re-awaken Russian and Austrian interests in intervention on behalf of the Dutch,[84] the French foreign minister Talleyrand found an opportunity to make conditional his state's support for British policy. The French foreign minister proposed that a Belgian ruler subservient to French interests be installed. Palmerston quickly turned on his ally and made common cause with the eastern powers in order to rebuff the French. A second duplicitous plot to install Louis-Phillipe's son, the Duke of Nemours, on the Belgian throne forced Palmerston to threaten general war in an alliance with the eastern powers against France. In a private letter, Palmerston stated that the British occupied the position of "impartial mediators between France on the one hand, and the three other Powers on the other…as long as both parties remain quiet, we shall be friends with both; but…whichever side breaks the peace, that side will find us against them."[85]

Despite success in the Belgian issue, Luxemburg, which served as a buffer region between Holland and Belgium, was still occupied by Belgian troops. Holland attacked Belgium in summer 1831 and the latter turned to France for

---

[84] G.W.T. Omond, "Belgium: 1830-1839," in Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch, eds., The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783-1919, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1923), pp. 144-46.

[85] Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer and the Hon. Evelyn Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1876), p. 39. Cited in Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in Bury, ed., The Zenith of European Power, op. cit., p. 249.

help. The London conference authorized Anglo-French intervention to expel the Dutch. Yet, after defeating the Dutch, France remained in Belgium refusing to go out until a full resolution of the Dutch-Belgian issue had been effected. Moreover, the French attempted to dictate the forts that were to be destroyed on the French-Belgian border.[86] According to Layne, by allowing the French to cherry-pick the forts to be destroyed, Belgium would be militarily exposed to France and subject to political pressure.[87] Again, Palmerston resorted to threats saying that "one thing is certain, the French must go out of Belgium, or we have a general war, and war in a few days."[88] The threat had its desired effect. A more moderate Casimir Périer government came to power in France and Anglo-French coordination on Belgian policy re-ensued with the French receiving none of their opportunistic demands.

Against the risk acceptant view that Britain saw the independence of Belgium as an opportunity to make economic gains at the expense of Holland is the risk averse view that the status quo was to be maintained by using the insurance premium in conservative fashion. Unfortunately, both viewpoints converge on the same policy of securing Belgian independence. Thus, it is difficult to definitively argue that risk aversion wins out over expected utility maximization in this phase of the crisis other than siding with the majority

---

[86] Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in Bury, ed., The Zenith of European Power, op. cit., p. 249.
[87] Layne, "Lord Palmerston and the Triumph of Realism," in Fendius Elman, ed., op. cit., p. 80.
[88] Omond, "Belgium: 1830-1839," in Ward and Gooch, eds., op. cit., pp. 144-46.

scholarly viewpoint of the period. The fact that France wanted to be rewarded for its virtuous behavior by trying to make opportunistic gains is not incompatible with prospect theory, but neither is France's rebuff by Britain.

In the second phase of the crisis, Holland continued to occupy Antwerp while Belgium continued to occupy Luxemburg. Moreover, Holland blocked shipping on the Scheldt River. Both Britain and France found that economic sanctions proposed by the eastern powers were insufficient to force the Dutch to adhere to the conference's Articles mandating an independent Belgium. France was eager to force the Dutch out of Antwerp militarily. The stakes were very high should France engage the Dutch unilaterally. According to Omond, the Belgians were out of patience and might attack the Dutch. Prussia would aid Holland and then take Alsace-Lorraine from the French should they be victorious. Should France be victorious it was believed that it would take provinces on the Rhine as well as Luxemburg while becoming the patron of Belgium. Austria and Russia would intervene to prevent the French from making such gains.[89]

In this second phase, Britain framed the crisis as one in which the insurance premium was to be used in a more risky fashion, but in order to prevent system-wide war. It was known that a strong Anglo-French deterrent stance in favor of Belgium would stay the hand of Prussia absent Russian

---

[89] Omond, "Belgium: 1830-1839," in Ward and Gooch, eds., op. cit., pp. 153-54; Muriel Chamberlain, 'Pax Britannica'? British Foreign Policy 1789-1914 (London: Longman, 1988), p. 71; John Clarke, British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy 1782-1865: The National Interest (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 195.

support.[90] Although Nicholas objected to a fellow monarch being deprived of his territory and thus threatened intervention in Belgium, the tsar mainly objected to the character of the July Revolution. In turn, Louis-Phillipe was anxious to declare his fealty to the status quo and when such bona fides were given, Nicholas had little interest in supporting Prussian aggression in support of the Dutch king.[91] Knowledge of Russia's position can only have made the Prussians more careful in their conduct.[92] Mutual knowledge of these viewpoints was the result of sustained communication on the part of the major powers. Because they were fearful of the consequences of intervention, dissembling as to the real interests of the major powers did not benefit anyone.

As noted above, for Britain to desert France would have ensured system-wide war. Thus, in October 1822 the French army reentered Belgium while the British navy blockaded the Scheldt. Russia left the conference while Austria and Prussia protested. According to Schroeder, this action "caused suspension of the conference and created a war scare more serious than any earlier one."[93] Such risky action also resolved the crisis as the Dutch withdrew from Antwerp and France withdrew its troops. It took five years for King William to reconcile himself to the loss of Belgium. But he was on his own as the major powers were now in full agreement as to the course of action even if they differed as how to

---

[90] Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 67-72.
[91] Church, op. cit., pp. 40-56; H.A.C. Collingham, The July Monarchy: A Political History of France 1830-1848 (London: Longman, 1988), pp. 189-90.
[92] Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 594, fn. 86.
[93] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., p. 690. Cited in Lindley, Promoting Peace with Information, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

achieve the goal of an independent Belgium. The eastern powers refused to engage in military coercion against the Dutch, thus delaying resolution of the crisis. For this reason, King William never accepted the fact of the changed status quo and sought to overturn it for as long as he could. Nevertheless, in 1839 an independent and neutral Belgium came into being which served as a buffer against France much in the same manner as did the United Netherlands.

The greater threat to the status quo was the possibility of major power intervention in central Europe, not the revolt of Belgium which all of the major powers realized had to be managed. Thus, all of the major powers were risk acceptant for loss but such widespread loss aversion resulted in a somewhat harmonized common policy of avoiding war and tolerating a small loss, that of the loss of a unified buffer region against possible French revisionism. Only France, and possibly Prussia, had an interest in taking risks in order to make gains, but both states were dissuaded from action because Britain restrained France and Russia lost its interest in aiding Prussia when France promised to respect its treaty obligations and to refrain from starting war with anyone.[94] Britain only took the risky action of forcing the Dutch out of Antwerp when it became clear that France and Prussia would take control of the situation in order to further their own narrow ends. Finally, despite incautious remarks made by the French in support of the uprisings in Poland, and then in Italy to which

[94] Lewis B. Namier, "1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals," Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. 30 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1944] 1971), pp. 35-6.

Metternich had to attend, the restraint on the part of the liberal states not to take advantage of the eastern powers' temporary weaknesses allowed for agreements that were not so fine-grained.[95] This had the effect of giving the major powers longer-run conceptions of others' interests than is normally the case in international relations. The liberal states largely got what they wanted in the Belgian crisis because they were also solicitous of the eastern powers' interests in their own spheres of interest. These expectations are largely in accord with the dynamics of widespread loss aversion.

Turkey and the Eastern Question: 1831 and 1839.

In 1831 Mehemet Ali, the pasha of Egypt and vassal of the Turkish Sultan Mahmud II, attacked Syria and Palestine with his son Ibrahim. Mehemet demanded full independence from Turkey after routing the Sultan's military forces. Mehemet was extremely ambitious and his long-term goals may have been to take Constantinople and the rest of the Ottoman Empire.[96] In turn, the Sultan asked for multilateral help from the major European powers in putting down Mehemet, whom Mahmud regarded as an outlaw. Much as in the Greek crisis, there was no one willing to intercede save for Russia, Turkey's least favored protector and traditional enemy in the region. "A drowning man will clutch at a serpent," was the retort given by a Turkish diplomat to his British and French opposite numbers after they implored the Porte to avoid allying with the

---

[95] Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 553-54.

[96] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., p. 37.

Russians.[97] France began cultivating Mehemet as a client in its attempt to make inroads into North Africa and to contest British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean[98] and was predisposed toward mediation rather than war. For his part, Louis-Phillipe did not encourage Mehemet's aggression.[99] Metternich declared Mehemet a rebel to be defeated but, once again, Metternich attempted to make Vienna the center of Concert diplomacy regarding this crisis to which Palmerston objected. Moreover, the British were absorbed in the Reform struggle at home as well as overextended militarily in their empire and could not provide resources.[100] Thus, for a variety of reasons, the British and the Austrians could not coordinate their opinions in the matter.

Without informing the other major powers, Russia dispatched 15,000 troops to the shores of the Bosphorus and a naval squadron anchored at Constantinople. Both the British and the French protested these Russian actions as violations of an 1809 Anglo-Turkish neutrality of the Straits agreement.[101] French naval forces threatened to clash with the Russians despite Turkey's refusal to allow the French to enter the Dardanelles. The Russian fleet stood ready on the shores of the Bosphorus to fire on French naval forces and a clash

---

[97] Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 175.
[98] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 39.
[99] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 197.
[100] Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 281-82, 302; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 175. Naval squadrons unavailable to Turkey were presently dispatched to Portugal and the Sheldt River in Belgium.
[101] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., pp. 34-35.

was averted due to diplomatic mediation on the part of Austria.[102] Russian mediation forced a settlement between Turkey and Egypt in 1833 after which Nicholas demonstrated moderation by withdrawing his troops from the region. Mehemet was able to keep his gains of Syria, Adana, and Tarsus while the Sultan was able to retain the rest of his holdings.

Nevertheless, for its unilateral efforts, Russia took from Turkey what the other major powers viewed as opportunistic gains. The Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi appeared to give Russia a preferential position in the region, but in essence it merely confirmed that existing bilateral treaties between Russia and Turkey would remain intact. The only material change was that Turkey was not obligated to support Russia in case of external aggression provided that the Dardanelles be closed to all armed vessels.[103] Palmerston was angry with Metternich, accusing him of misleading diplomacy as to Nicholas's intentions regarding Turkey. Metternich, for his part, felt that he had been taken advantage of by Nicholas.[104]

Because the Ottoman Empire lay astride Russia, the latter was adamant that it was part of its sphere of influence. Whereas Russia was willing to give

---

[102] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 175-76.
[103] David Wetzel, The Crimean War: A Diplomatic History (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, NY, 1985), p. 29.
[104] Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 306, 310. For a dissenting view that Metternich was satisfied with Nicholas's actions, see, G. H. Bolsover, "Lord Ponsonby," Slavonic and Eastern European Review, vol. 13, no. 37 (July 1934), p. 102; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 177.

way regarding Greek independence, it did not believe that the Ottoman Empire was a contested area. Thus, it was much less willing to negotiate multilaterally with the other major European powers regarding Turkey.[105] During the 18th century, Russia was engaged in creeping imperialism within the Ottoman Empire, but Russia was now content with its holdings and was looking only to consolidate them.[106] As noted before, consolidation meant to Nicholas a weak, divided Turkish state, not a strong one that might oppose Russian interests.

It has been argued that Britain considered the Ottoman Empire to be as important a strategic area for its security as was the European Low Countries during this period,[107] but this argument is difficult to sustain. It is true that Britain had more than a passing interest in the Ottoman Empire, but Britain was overextended in the rest of its empire and consequently had to make difficult decisions as where to deploy its military resources effectively. Moreover, the advent of steam technology and its application to overland travel as a short route to India was not yet appreciated in the first phase of this crisis. Had the short routes been available, much less contemplated, rather than the long sea route around the Cape of Good Hope, Palmerston would likely not have dithered in asserting British interests in the area. He could only register displeasure with

---

[105] Jelavich, Russia's Balkan Entanglement, op. cit., pp. 75, 82; Anderson, "Russia and the Eastern Question," in Sked, ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848, op. cit., p. 64.
[106] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., p. 37.
[107] John Marlowe, Perfidious Albion: The Origins of the Anglo-French Rivalry in the Levant (London: Elek Books, 1971), p. 8. For a more balanced view, see, Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 173-78, 192-95.

Russian actions, but little more than that. Even so, the Duke of Wellington overestimated British influence in the region, believing that a plain veto by the British would have stayed the hand of Mehemet without the intervention of Russian troops. And, as if to salve his ego, Palmerston argued unconvincingly before Parliament that British representations to Mehemet materially contributed to the resulting peace settlement.[108] Yet, despite its protestations, Britain could take a somewhat relaxed view of the situation as the Russian preference for a weak Turkey was in Britain's interest as well.[109] Thus, Palmerston could state that, "with Russia we are just as we were, snarling at each other, but neither wishing for war…"[110] During this period, France was an interloper looking to make gains in the region, but was at a disadvantage to Russia's strong deterrent stand, which is expected by prospect theory. Prussia was not materially involved in this crisis. Perhaps Austria could make some trouble for Russia in this region, but it could not project its power. Recognizing that this was the case, Russia and Austria closed ranks with meetings in Münchengrätz at which both monarchs coordinated continued repression of Poles and German liberals within their respective spheres of influence, reaffirmed the right to intervene in the affairs of

---

[108] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 178.
[109] Harold Temperly, England and the Near East: The Crimea (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1964), p. 93.
[110] Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 182. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 178.

other states to prevent revolution, but also resolved not to partition Turkey.[111] Seton-Watson argues that it was this moderation on the part of Nicholas regarding the Ottoman Empire that contributed to the relative détente that obtained between the liberal western and conservative eastern powers from 1831-39.[112]

During this first phase of the crisis, Russia framed the situation as one of maintaining the status quo by using the insurance premium in conservative fashion. Nicholas had little trouble in suppressing the ambitions of Mehemet Ali and propping up the Sultan, but only if the other major powers did not intercede. He did take some chances by acting unilaterally, but a power vacuum existed which the tsar happily filled as the other major powers declined to aid the Sultan other than to offer weak diplomatic support. Nicholas was willing to risk a small war in order to avert dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, possibly a sure, but small, loss, as Russia would then proceed to carve up parts of the Empire for itself. Again, because the crisis largely concerned Russia in its declared sphere of influence, the other major powers save for France found it in their interest to register diplomatic objections rather than to send military forces. A military

---

[111] C.J. Bartlett, Peace, War and the European Powers 1814-1914 (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), p. 34.

[112] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 178. France and Britain made common cause by deposing an authoritarian usurper and installing a liberal ruler in Portugal and protecting a liberal ruler against deposition by an authoritarian pretender in Spain. This was a response to eastern authoritarian intervention in the affairs of other states and was effective in ensuring that liberalism could still continue to get a hearing during the Concert period without precipitating a military clash between the great powers. See, Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 386-410.

engagement between France and Russia on the Bosphorus was potentially dangerous, but likely would not have resulted in a system-wide war. France was trying to make gains by supporting its renegade client. Russia was able to deter the French from military action and the face-saving offices of Austrian mediation kept the two powers from deserting the Concert. Britain's military forces were preoccupied in other parts of its empire. Thus, they were in no position to oppose Russia. Additionally, Britain and Russian interests in maintaining the Ottoman Empire were essentially the same. Suspicions were inflamed because the other major powers incorrectly believed that Russia made opportunistic gains through the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, but the agreement merely confirmed existing bilateral treaty obligations between Russia and Turkey. Although communication was deficient during this phase of the crisis, suspicions were partly allayed because Nicholas was moderate in his behavior by refraining from splitting the Ottoman Empire. Because Nicholas largely had the field to himself, his restraint in not demanding more in concessions from Turkey is not easily squared with realist cost-benefit calculations that might have demanded more for his help.

In the second phase of the crisis, Mehemet regarded the earlier settlement as a mere truce to be broken when he found it advantageous. In 1838 he declared his independence from the Sultan. In turn, the Sultan unwisely attacked Mehemet in order to recover his territorial losses from the first phase of the crisis, but was soundly defeated and his entire navy defected to the enemy. Mahmud II

died unexpectedly leaving a leadership vacuum in Turkey. It looked as though Mehemet might conquer the Ottoman Empire.

Palmerston acted with considerable dispatch in contrast to his earlier dithering. He wanted to overturn the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi and replace it with a multilateral convention on the status of the Ottoman Empire. The foreign secretary wanted this change because the strategic situation was materially different from the earlier phase of the crisis. Trade was steadily increasing in the Levant and the new steam technology gave Britain hope that short overland routes to India might be feasible, either through Suez (were a canal to be built) and the Red Sea, or across the Syrian Desert to the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf.[113] Additionally, Palmerston increasingly came to believe that Mehemet was a client of France and he did not wish to see the Ottoman Empire partitioned between Russia and France, thus shutting Britain out.

For his part, Nicholas found the bilateral treaty to be burdensome; he knew that the Turks would repudiate it if they could and that Britain could entice the Turks to do so with little effort. Moreover, the same advantages obtained by Unkiar Skelessi could be had with any arrangement that provided for closure of the Straits. Finally, Nicholas wanted to detach France from Britain as he believed that the former was the prime fomenter of revolution throughout

---

[113] According to Seton-Watson, "Britain's interest in the new route to India sharpened her eye for strategic points, and an outrage committed on a British crew near Aden led to the occupation of that outpost in 1839" (Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 192-93).

Europe.[114] Russia and Britain jointly drafted the settlement; Turkey was returned much of what it lost in 1833 while Mehemet kept Egypt and Syria. Additionally, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles were to be closed to all warships.

The French were intransigent and wanted to secure better terms for their client than the other major powers were willing to allow. Moreover, the anglophobic Thiers government wished to restore French influence throughout Europe. Thiers did not want war with Britain, but he overestimated Mehemet's bargaining power and mistakenly thought that Palmerston would back down as the British cabinet was divided in the matter. Instead, Palmerston threatened to resign and thus bring down the Whig government if his views not accepted[115] and he drew together the other major powers to sign a Quadruple Agreement settling the Eastern Question, all the while isolating France. In turn, the Thiers government threatened war with Britain and, bizarrely, Prussia. Palmerston called Thiers' bluff telling his ambassador to Paris, "if France throws down the gauntlet, we shall not refuse to pick it up; and that, if she begins a war, she will certainly lose her ships, colonies and commerce before she sees the end of it; that her army in Algeria will cease to give anxiety and that [Mehemet] Ali will just be chucked into the Nile."[116] Palmerston's deterrent threat hit its mark as Louis-

---

[114] Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in Bury, ed., The Zenith of European Power, op. cit., p. 256.
[115] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 205.
[116] Marlowe, Perfidious Albion, op. cit., p. 270. Cited in Layne, "Lord Palmerston and the Triumph of Realism," in Fendius Elman, ed., op. cit., p. 88.

Phillipe swallowed a diplomatic defeat by forcing out Thiers and replacing him with the more moderate Soult government.

For its part, Austria sought to make gains but its mediation was not without merit. Metternich was able to force the dismissal of the Sultan's more intransigent advisors, thus paving the way for a settlement with Mehemet.[117] But again, by attempting to make Vienna the center of Concert diplomacy, Nicholas detected an anti-Russian cast to the settlement. Although he agreed in principle with the settlement, Nicholas made common cause with Britain in enforcing it.[118] Although Austria, in turn, tilted towards France, it was also able to bring France back into the Concert fold and all five major powers were signatories to the 1841 Straits Convention, thus successfully concluding the series of crises regarding the Eastern Question.[119]

The second phase of the crisis does not fully vindicate the dynamics of widespread loss aversion. While one should not make too much of Britain's dilatory response to the crisis in the first phase (after all a state with a world-wide empire is necessarily preoccupied with many problems), it is difficult to argue that its response in the second phase was a risk acceptant response to a sure loss of the status quo. Rather, the difference in utilities across the two phases likely explains Britain's significant interest in rolling back what it perceived as opportunistic gains by Russia in the first phase. All of a sudden the advent of the

---

[117] Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in Bury, ed., The Zenith of European Power, op. cit., p. 257.
[118] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 198-200.
[119] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., p. 751.

short routes to India through the Levant in the second phase made Britain much more interested in asserting its strategic interests there.

Russia's response is more in keeping with the dynamics of widespread loss aversion. It was quite willing to give up a preferential position that it received almost by accident in the first phase, closure of the Straits to warships, which had the effect of closing in Russia while closing out Britain, if a similar satisfactory solution could be found. Moreover, Nicholas found the treaty not to be much of an endowment if Turkey would repudiate it when it pleased. Had Nicholas really believed the advantages derived from Unkiar Skelessi to be worth keeping, he likely would have opposed Britain on the grounds that he believed the latter was trying to make gains at Russia's expense. Kagan argues that Britain perceived the significance of the treaty to give Russia predominant influence in the region and a virtual protectorate over Turkey.[120] But the reality was quite different. Consequently, Nicholas recognized the misapprehensions and suspicions of Russia that the treaty caused in the other major states largely because of the sustained communication that took place with Britain. Thus, there was a happy harmony of interests in Nicholas dispensing with this presumed privilege.[121] This is clear evidence that Russia was willing to cede accidentally

---

[120] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., p. 40.

[121] According to Webster, "Palmerston was satisfied with what had been done. He secured complete equality with Russia as regards the Straits, and since Russia was so much nearer to Turkey than Britain the closing of the Straits was to the advantage of the latter. Moreover, Britain had no intention of attacking the Ottoman Empire and desired none of its territories" (Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 772). According to Mosely, Nesselrode

gotten gains similar in magnitude to a loss that they would find unacceptable and preferred instead to restore the status quo.

France and Austria were less secure states; thus, by varying methods they attempted to make gains at the expense of others. Mehemet was successful in repeatedly routing the Sultan, but his military success did not make his conquests legitimate. Neither did France make them legitimate by grafting its ambitions in North Africa to Mehemet's successes. Austria conducted itself as an insecure state does in making itself indispensable to the other major powers by attempting to gain for itself the center of diplomatic activity.

As noted earlier, because they were successful in working together to put a satisfactory resolution to the crisis, Nicholas asked Palmerston for a permanent alliance against France. Palmerston courteously responded by "emphasizing Britain's intention of continuing 'to watch attentively and to guard with care the maintenance of the Balance of Power', and 'that an attempt of one nation to appropriate to itself territory which belongs to another nation' would 'constitute a derangement of the existing balance'. In addition, he explained the constitutional difficulties which prevented the British government from entering

---

found closure of the Straits by any measure to be in Russia's interests (Philip E. Mosely, Russian Diplomacy and the Opening of the Eastern Question in 1839 and 1839 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934), pp. 67-92). Taking both Palmerston's and Nesselrode's opinions into account, a fair assessment of this agreement is that both Britain and Russia believed they profited, thus, it was a win-win situation.

into 'engagements with reference to cases which have not actually arisen.'"[122] Palmerston's response is a classic instance of keeping one's options open. Kagan sees in sentiments such as this an attempt by Britain to use the Concert for its narrow self-interests: "Palmerston used a four-power coalition as a tool to isolate France, and once this important goal had been achieved, had no further use for multilateral cooperation."[123] But Britain always preferred a looser arrangement than did the continental powers given its world-wide interests and more tenuous connection to Europe.[124] Moreover, by allowing France to return to the Concert when it became obvious to Louis-Phillipe that Thiers' position regarding Mehemet was untenable, Palmerston took account of France's longer-run security interests. Webster argues that although the French government disliked Palmerston, it recognized that his policy was justified by the circumstances, and thus were anxious to renew the entente cordiale that existed between the two states since resolution of the Belgian crisis.[125]

---

[122] Frederick S. Rodkey, "Anglo-Russian Negotiations about a 'Permanent' Quadruple Alliance," American Historical Review, vol. 36, no. 2 (January 1931), p. 343. Cited in Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in Bury, ed., The Zenith of European Power, op. cit., p. 258.
[123] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., p. 49.
[124] F.H. Hinsley, Power and the Pursuit of Peace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 202-12.
[125] Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 776. Also see Webster's sanguine view of Anglo-Russian relations at fn. 121. For a much more critical view, Jack Snyder argues that,

> "Palmerston forced an isolated France to abandon its Egyptian ally, [Mehemet] Ali, in his war against the Turks in 1840; [and] he compelled an isolated Russia to accept British dominance in the Turkish Straits in 1841…After humiliating France in the [Mehemet] Ali crisis of 1840, Palmerston refused to make face-saving gestures because he wanted to

The 1848 revolutions (the Italian revolts from Austrian dominance).

Social revolutions began in France and swept through Italy, Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Schleswig-Holstein. Britain and Russia resolved together to maintain the status quo, but interceded individually and used the different methods of intervention and non-intervention to achieve their common aims.[126] Palmerston publicly declared, "we will engage to prevent the rest of Europe from settling with France" and he accepted the new French Foreign Minister Lamartine's public promises to maintain the peace with Europe.[127] A German plan to prosecute a war with Poland against Russia was predicated on French military support and British benevolence. Palmerston asserted in no uncertain terms to the Prussians that Britain would not let the plan proceed, thus putting an end to it. This is a good example of Britain's indispensibility to the security of the other major powers. Later, Hungarian pleas for help from Britain in seceding from Austria fell on deaf ears and Palmerston instructed the Russian ambassador in London to intervene to put down the revolt. Despite the liberal proclivities of

---

show France that good relations with Britain could be maintained only on British terms. In short, Palmerston's notion of a stable Concert was not one featuring internalized norms of reciprocal restraint, but one in which the other powers accepted British primacy"(Snyder, Myths of Empire, op. cit., pp. 175-76).

[126] Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in Bury, ed., The Zenith of European Power, op. cit., pp. 260-61.

[127] Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 258.

the revolutionaries, Palmerston would not allow the Prussians to aid a Schleswig-Holstein revolt from Danish rule.[128]

The most dangerous crisis to the peace was precipitated by the Italian provinces against Austria.[129] According to Taylor, "hard geographical reality stood between France and Poland; nothing seemed to stand between France and Italy except a French reluctance to launch a great war. And, on the other side, control of Italy was fundamental to the existence of Austria as a Great Power, or so Austrian statesmen argued; this was a very different question from the future of [Schleswig] or even from the independence of Denmark. Hence it was in Italy that British policy was most active and displayed most initiative."[130]

In the first phase of the crisis, Charles Albert, the king of Sardinia-Piedmont, exhorted the peoples of Lombardy and Venetia to revolt against Austrian rule after the collapse of Metternich's government. Palmerston believed that a strong Austria played a crucial role in maintaining the peace, but, again, he had to decide whether the revolts could be contained and he did not think that

---

[128] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., pp. 782-97; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 265-71; Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., pp. 61-68.

[129] Regarding the 1815 settlement, "since France wanted Italy, Britain wanted to keep France out of there, and Russia, in turn, wanted to keep Britain out too. Austria was a safe choice; both Russia and Britain treated it more gently in diplomatic affairs because of this. French influence in Italy was curbed and the territory was recognized as an Austrian preserve" (Slantchev, "Territory and Commitment," op. cit., p. 589).

[130] A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 17.

the Austrians were capable of doing so.[131] The decline of Austrian leadership went hand-in-hand with the rise of the Risorgimento, a broad movement toward Italian unity.[132] Austria's problems in Italy were political rather than economic or cultural. Because of deficient statesmanship, particularly the accession of Francis I's dim-witted son Ferdinand to the throne, Austria would neither promote useful change nor allow others to do so.[133] Thus, Palmerston framed the situation as one of attempting to maintain the status quo by accepting a small, but sure, loss in allowing a measure of independence in the Italian provinces. Again, the insurance premium was to be used in conservative fashion.

As noted above, after Metternich's departure, Austria's provisional government did not have strong leadership and was unusually susceptible to British diplomatic opinion. The Austrian diplomat Hummelauer stressed to Palmerston the possibility of French intervention and the impossibility of Austria fighting France as well as Piedmont at the same time.[134] Thus, the Austrians were willing to consider making Lombardy-Piedmont an autonomous kingdom under an Austrian archduke as viceroy, but with its own parliament, government, and army.[135] But Palmerston was of the opinion that Austria would be a stronger bulwark against Russia in the Near East if it were to rid itself of its ungovernable

---

[131] Bridge and Bullen, The Great Powers and the European States System 1815-1914, op. cit., p. 71.
[132] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., p. 775.
[133] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., pp. 776-77; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 259-60.
[134] William L. Langer, Political and Social Upheaval 1832-1852 (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 381; Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 429-30.
[135] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 260.

Italian provinces.[136] He also conceived of a new strong northern Italian state as a buffer between France and the rest of Europe.[137] Thus, Palmerston proposed that Austria be rid outright of Lombardy, as well as portions of Venetia to which both sides might mutually agree. The Austrian hand was weak and Palmerston was later able to say, quite disingenuously, that this proposal "gave away nothing to Austria, because the Italians would agree to nothing less than the whole, but it saves the Austrian honour."[138]

The British foreign secretary's sentiment was prescient. The provisional government in Milan overreached by demanding that any offer of independence had to include the whole of Austrian Italy (to include the South Tirol).[139] The situation changed radically when the Italians were subsequently crushed by the Austrian military at Custoza in the first Italian war. In consequence, the Austrians became less amenable to independence for Lombardy because they were convinced of the bad faith of the Italians. Thus, the Austrians became more risk acceptant for loss.

The Italians appealed for help from the French. Should France intervene militarily, a system-wide war would result. In part, the problem was French political opinion. Louis-Phillipe did not want to go to war, but as Cavaignac,

---

[136] Bartlett, Peace, War and the European Powers 1814-1914, op. cit., p. 47; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 17-18.
[137] Langer, Political and Social Upheaval 1832-1852, op. cit., p. 382; Bridge and Bullen, The Great Powers and the European States System 1815-1914, op. cit., p. 71.
[138] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 260.
[139] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 20.

who headed the provisional government, put it, "if …there came a popular appeal for assistance from the Italian people…no government established here would long be able to resist the demand."[140] Moreover, Savoy and Nice, led by the king of Sardinia, were the spoils of war given to Italy for opposing Napoleon and represented "the most flagrant symbols of France's humiliation in 1815."[141] According to Taylor, "the greatest problem in French policy towards Italy turned on this trivial point: it was impossible for the French to aid Italy without demanding Savoy and Nice for themselves. In 1848 the French rulers already knew this; the Italians, or at least the Piedmontese, knew it; and the king of Sardinia knew it most of all."[142]

Louis-Phillipe framed the situation as taking risky action in aid of the Italians in order to save his own position. Nevertheless, Palmerston understood the French ruler's predicament and was able to reframe the situation by suggesting that mediation based on the original idea of joining Lombardy to Piedmont be pursued. Such a solution, which Louis-Phillipe quickly grasped and accepted, mollified French political opinion in the streets while at the same time allowed the French king to maintain his bona fides to keep the general peace

---

[140] Taylor, The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934), p. 138. Cited in Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in Bury, ed., The Zenith of European Power, op. cit., p. 263; Bridge and Bullen, The Great Powers and the European States System 1815-1914, op. cit., p. 71. Although he favored mediation, Cavaignac was prepared to send an army of 60,000 troops to force the Austrians out of northern Italy. See, George J. Billy, Palmerston's Foreign Policy: 1848 (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), p. 139.

[141] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 19.

[142] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

with the other great powers. Realist accounts such as Lindley's that only accord hard-boiled realpolitik diplomacy as being effective[143] miss events such as this in which empathy for another statesman's predicament leads to a creative solution.

British and Austrian framing of the situation is in accord with our theory. A measure of independence in the Italian provinces might deflate calls for Italian unity in a region that the Austrians found was rapidly becoming ungovernable. A strong Austria was in the interests of all of the major powers to maintaining the peace. The Austrians were in a temporarily weakened position, but suspicions and rivalries among the various Italian governments were even more debilitating and Charles Albert's overreaching put himself in the unenviable position of trying to expel the Austrians with the help of the French only to have the latter refuse to leave. Luckily, Palmerston was able to give France the only reason for not intervening by reframing the situation based on the original proposal to give independence to a few Italian provinces. Although not discounted by our theory, such empathetic reframing is an unexpected finding. Realist cost-benefit calculations would expect that France make opportunistic gains by intervening on behalf of the Italian provinces; that it did not do so provides evidence for our theory.

In the second phase of the crisis, Prince Schwarzenberg, who replaced Metternich and put Austrian foreign policy on a firm course, refused to make any concessions and engaged in brutal repression of the Italians saying, "we

---

[143] Lindley, Promoting Peace with Information, op. cit., pp. 80-85.

shall take our stand on the treaties, we shall not cede an inch of ground."[144] Radetzky, the Austrian commander-in-chief, urged Schwarzenberg to military action: "Give me the opportunity and you will soon see me lay the whole of Italy, up to the frontier of the noble King of Naples, at the feet of His Majesty the Emperor…"[145] Thus, the Austrians reframed the situation as using the insurance premium in order to take risky action to maintain the status quo. Unfortunately, Charles Albert reopened his demands by prosecuting the second Italian war with Austria and he was no more successful than in the first phase of the crisis. An incompetent Italian army was crushed by the Austrians at the battle of Novara.

Palmerston saw his risk averse policy failing and became more risk acceptant. According to Taylor, "for the sake of peace and the status quo, Great Britain had to accept attacks on the status quo or even to go to war; not surprisingly the British tried to escape from this contradiction by claiming idealistic motives for their foreign policy. In reality British policy would never have bestirred itself for Italian nationalism, had it not been for fear of an explosion from France."[146]

De Tocqueville, the new French foreign minister, asked Palmerston to join in defending Piedmont were it to be attacked again. Britain did not have the

---

[144] Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 261.
[145] Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 213-14.
[146] Billy, Palmerston, op. cit., p. 142; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 21.

military means to affect the outcome.[147] Moreover, Palmerston recognized that French forces, once engaged, would never leave Italy.[148] As always, Palmerston's aim was to keep the French out of Italy and thus prevent a system-wide war, not to promote Italian unification. He demurred by telling the French foreign minister that the interest of the British in Italian unification was not equal to that of the French. Britain was willing to offer its diplomatic assistance and moral support, but not much more.[149]

Schwarzenberg convinced himself that Britain was promoting the Italian cause while France had abandoned it.[150] In a fit of pique the prince opined,

> "Lord Palmerston regards himself too much as the arbiter of Europe. For our part we are not disposed to accord him the role of Providence. We never impose our advice on him in relation to Ireland: let him spare himself the trouble of advising us on the subject of Lombardy…We are tired of his eternal insinuations, of his tone now protective and pedantic, now insulting, but always unbecoming. We are resolved to tolerate it no longer. Lord Palmerston said one day to Koller, that if we wanted war, we would have it: I say, if he wants war, he shall have it."[151]

Schwarzenberg's opinion was not the result of dispassionate analysis. It fact, British and French opinions were quite the reverse. Palmerston was no longer advocating that Austria relinquish territory because he feared that he could no

---

[147] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., p. 782.
[148] Taylor, The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849, op. cit., pp. 216-17.
[149] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 263.
[150] Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 436-37; Ridley, Lord Palmerston, op. cit., p. 350; Billy, Palmerston, op. cit., p. 141.
[151] George Earle Buckle, ed., Letters of Queen Victoria, 3rd series, vol. 2 (London: J. Murray, 1931), p. 471. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 262.

longer control French policy.[152] But neither would Palmerston publicly guarantee this position to Schwarzenberg because doing so would lose the faith of the Italians as well as the liberals in Britain, the latter of whom the foreign secretary relied upon to support his policy of maintaining the general peace in Europe.[153] For its part, France could not tolerate an Austrian army in Piedmont so close to the French border and news came to Palmerston that the French were attempting to secure Parma and Modena for Sardinia and taking Savoy as recompense for their assistance.[154]

The news of the disaster at Novara threw the French government into action. The Committee of Foreign Affairs resolved to occupy Savoy and a proposal in the Assembly to intervene militarily almost carried. Finally, Louis Napoleon, the new French president, wanted to dispatch an army across the Alps.[155]

By strongly intimating that he would not be able to control French policy, Palmerston, through his French ambassador to the confidential Austrian agent, Hübner, was able to concentrate Schwarzenberg's mind.[156] In correspondence to

---

[152] Taylor, The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849, op. cit., p. 203.
[153] Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 426-27; Taylor, The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849, op. cit., p. 226. Palmerston reckoned that by courting Austria instead of supporting France he would alienate the latter without gaining the former. See, Billy, Palmerston, op. cit., p. 143.
[154] Taylor, The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849, op. cit., p. 233.
[155] Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 437; Taylor, The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849, op. cit., p. 223.
[156] Billy, Palmerston, op. cit., p. 140; Frank J. Coppa, The Origins of the Italian Wars of Independence (New York: Longman, 1992), pp. 66-7; Bartlett, Peace, War and the European Powers 1814-1914, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

Schwarzenberg, Hübner stated, "above all the marshal must avoid reopening the hostilities. That would bring France and England on us at once. Be sure that five days after the first cannon-shot on the Sesia, the French would land in Nice and Genoa…"[157] Due to increasing activity on the part of the French in Italy combined with Palmerston's warnings and Hübner's entreaty, the Austrian minister refrained from continued humiliation of the Piedmontese. Thus, in 1849 a peace treaty was signed in which the 1815 settlement was restored. In this instance, after changes of position and hard bargaining on the part of the major powers, the status quo was provisionally changed, but ultimately restored to the major powers' satisfaction. Moreover, as Schroeder a bit optimistically observes, "the striking thing is that by 1846-8 Austria was no longer trying to keep France out of Italy or France trying to throw Austria out."[158]

The dynamics of the second phase of the crisis largely comports with widespread loss aversion. Both Britain and Austria framed the situation as one of taking risks in order to maintain the status quo. Because of bad faith on the part of the Italians, the Austrians were determined to snuff out the flame of revolution because there seemed to be no end to Italian demands. In turn, Britain knew that France would not be able to refrain from intervening if for no other reason than it could not tolerate the Austrians on its border in Piedmont. By taking the chance that events would get out of control, Palmerston was able to

---

[157] Taylor, The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849, op. cit., p. 229, fn. 2.
[158] Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, op. cit., pp. 780-81.

convince Schwarzenberg to proceed carefully. Hübner was able to convey to Schwarzenberg the views of the British foreign office: "The Queen's government wants Italy pacified as soon as possible. All our efforts are towards that end: Lord Palmerston desires it as much as you."[159] In effect, Palmerston instructed Schwarzenberg to put down the Italian insurrection, but not to attempt to vanquish the enemy or system-wide war would result. It did not take Palmerston to make Schwarzenberg see that the interests of both states were similar in this regard. In contrast, realist cost-benefit calculations would argue that Austria should have escalated its military objectives when Italians forces were being routed, but restraint obtained, which is expected by widespread loss aversion.

Conclusions.

Widespread loss aversion requires more connective tissue than does realism, but less than liberal institutionalism. Realist accounts of this period cannot explain why there ought to be vested interests on the part of the major powers that no state be inordinately insecure. Loss aversion by itself does little better in this regard. If states are risk acceptant for loss (even if they are risk averse for gain), why should they care if others lose even as they are able to maintain their holdings? Unless loss aversion is widespread and is understood by all, and that all understand this to be the case, individualistic measures will still seem attractive in order to maintain one's security. In contrast, liberal institutionalism posits a more harmonious world than the diplomatic relations of the period

[159] Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 263.

reveal. In this regard, Kagan's attempt to distinguish realism from liberal institutionalism by comparing the cooperation to competition ratio between the two approaches and applying it to this period of history,[160] while theoretically fruitful, misses certain subtleties of international diplomacy. First, looking only at discrete case studies misses the important point that what comes before is likely to be of consequence to present and future events. Moreover, sometimes it takes hard bargaining and a willingness to threaten isolation in order to bring a state around to the fact that its policy is untenable. As Stein shows, conflict can occur in order to enforce cooperation.[161] In such cases, the cooperative to competitive ratio would be quite misleading as an indicator of the degree of conflict between states and the purposes for such conflict. Finally, realists argue that competitive actions are taken as evidence that liberal institutionalism is irrelevant, but they are unable to explain surprising instances in which states do not press for maximum advantage and actually take the interests of other states into account. Moreover, related to the first point, they do not attempt to connect instances in which a statesman is hostile towards a foreign statesman, but then later demonstrates empathy for the latter's situation.

More generally, the period of the attenuated Concert should have seen much more conflict than that which actually occurred. In Schroeder's words, "…when everything was over, not one war between Great Powers had broken

---

[160] Kagan, "The Myth of the European Concert," op. cit., pp. 14-22.
[161] Arthur Stein, "Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World," in Baldwin, ed., Neorealism and Neoliberalism, op. cit., pp. 29-59.

out, not one international boundary had been altered, and not one treaty had been torn up. In short, though all the factors that were said to have produced peace and stability after 1815 had been suspended or destroyed, peace had been maintained, and the international crises had been managed." [162]

Two cases examined in this chapter are most unpromising for cooperative solutions. The Greek crises of 1821 and 1826, and the Eastern Question crises of 1831 and 1839 involving Turkey and Egypt, respectively, are least-likely cases for widespread loss aversion theory. Both cases generated significant interest on the part of the major European powers because strategic interests in projecting power and maintaining security were at stake. Moreover, the geographic areas in which they took place were not covered by the 1815 settlement; thus, they were contested areas. We should have seen much more evidence of states taking opportunistic gains should others not be able to compete as effectively. Specifically, Russia might have done what it wished regarding Greece and the Ottoman Empire as it could project its military power in this area much more effectively than could the other major powers. But Russia preferred to maintain its holdings and not aggrandize itself when it might have done so with impunity. Regarding the Eastern crisis, Britain became much more interested in the Levant during the second phase when the possibility of short routes to India dictated an increased interest in the area. Loss aversion works less well in this instance than does realist cost-benefit calculations in which differences in risk-taking on the

---

[162] Schroeder, "The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure," World Politics, vol. 39, no. 1 (October 1986), p. 5.

part of the British between the two phases of the crisis reflect differences in utilities. But widespread loss aversion is still operative because Russia should have vigorously opposed British demands, seeing the latter as only attempting to make opportunistic gains, but was instead willing to concede the advantages that it obtained as a consequence of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi in the first phase of the crisis. Such concessions should not be expected by realist expected utility maximization.

In the Belgian case, the insurance premium was used in conservative fashion in order to retain the rest of the status quo. Loss aversion points to the wisdom of giving Belgium independence in order to prevent system-wide war, but so does utility maximization if the goal of Britain was to diminish the economic might of the United Netherlands. Loss aversion wins out only because the predominant scholarly view supports the former rather than the latter thesis. In the second phase of the crisis, France was tempted by various measures to make gains with regard to Belgium, which is consistent with both utility maximization and prospect theory. Nevertheless, France backed down quickly when it saw that these gains would be vigorously opposed and that it preferred maintenance of the status quo to a dangerous revision, which is better explained by loss aversion than expected utility maximization. Moreover, expected utility maximization would not predict that Britain would ally with France in order to contain it. But, widespread loss aversion can explain why this occurred because Britain saw that France was insecure, not irremediably aggressive. Moreover, the

conservative states could trust Britain not to make gains at their expense because the liberal states refrained from interfering in the problems of the eastern states. Narrow self-interest to include the interests of others was thus expanded as well as made more long-run than is usually the case in international relations.

The arc of the Italian crisis is much the same as the Belgian case. The insurance premium is initially used in conservative fashion in order to maintain what can be retained of the status quo, but is then used in risky fashion as the initial policy is seen to be failing. Again, France might have made gains from an expected utility maximization standpoint but was ultimately restrained in its behavior. What is interesting here is the perceptiveness of Palmerston to reframe the situation for the benefit of Louis-Phillipe. Prospect theory argues that leaders are prone to take risky actions if failing to do so means electoral punishment by domestic interests. But finding a creative solution that satisfies the demands of both domestic and international audiences while maintaining the peace is not inconsistent with widespread loss aversion, although it is an unexpected salutary finding. Such a finding is beyond the conception of expected utility maximization. Finally, the Belgian and Italian cases were related as France and Britain worked together to oppose material changes in the status quo even as they had different interests. Remembrance that Britain had worked with France in the Belgian case generated the expectation that they could similarly do so when the Italian revolts broke out. Expected utility maximization relates differences in risk-taking to differences in utilities, thus cases are examined in

isolation of one another, which does not comport with the reality of international diplomacy.

On balance, widespread loss aversion is supported over realist expected utility maximization, its strongest theoretical competitor, by the four important case studies examined here.

Chapter 3: Mutual conciliatory affective abandonment: The Crimean War.

The 'tradition of appeasement' in British foreign policy is traced by Kennedy from the death of Palmerston in 1865 until its breakdown in 1939. The historian is even-handed in his exposition of the tradition, which largely occurred as a rational response to internal and external impulses that coalesced, namely early industrialization, free-trade, enlargement of the voting franchise at home, and world-wide empire acquired and sustained on the cheap.[1] In fact, the rational give-and-take in international politics so as not to overextend oneself dates back to the provisionally non-interventionist policies of Castlereagh and Canning, respectively, who expected reciprocal considerations from other powers in the non-interference of British interests abroad, and asserted themselves when clashes of interest occurred and low-cost remedies were available. Otherwise, with a few egregious exceptions, the British largely conceded when appropriate.[2] Off and on again British intervention in Continental politics largely contributed to the imbalanced structural conditions of the 19th century and if the dynamics of affective abandonment partially resonate with the tradition of appeasement, as analyzed by Kennedy, evidence can be found that Palmerston's death did not mark the appearance of the tradition. Rather, an aptly titled chapter by Bourne,

---

[1] Paul M. Kennedy, "The Tradition of Appeasement in British Foreign Policy, 1865-1939" in Kennedy, Strategy and Diplomacy 1870-1945: Eight Studies (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), pp. 15-39.

[2] The appeasement of Hitler and the failure to appease during India's drive for independence were colossal foreign policy mistakes.

"Appeasement, Revolution, and War, 1841-1856"[3] suggests a good place to locate an earlier example of the systemic dynamic.

Five representative case studies are examined regarding the dynamics of structural imbalance and irrational consistency, the latter of which is largely the result of motivated bias. The first case study, which comprises the present chapter, examines the quixotic diplomacy leading to the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853. This is the only system-wide war involving all of the major European powers prior to the outbreak of the First World War and can largely be traced to the mutual abandonment of Russian and British state interests regarding the Ottoman Empire. Swift preference reversals on both sides reasserted authority as the consequence of a crisis generated by opportunistic third parties, namely France and Turkey.

The usual trend from cooperation to conflict occurs when states individually come to believe that they are making all of the concessions while others are increasingly taking advantage of their unilateral restraint.[4] But the Crimean War case illuminates a more subtle and opposite dynamic in which states committed to upholding the status quo are overly solicitous of the other's interests and thus fail to make clear their determination to defend their own interests in a territorial area of mutual concern. They may do so because of the

---

[3] Kenneth Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), Chapter 3. The time frame encompasses the Peel government (1841-46) until Aberdeen's coalition government (1852-55).
[4] Robert Jervis, "Security Regimes," in Stephen D. Krasner, ed., International Regimes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 184.

anticipated effects of their actions or non-actions on the perceptions of relevant third parties. The uncertainty associated with structurally imbalanced conditions regarding alignment patterns[5] can be exacerbated when states develop motivated biases to overlook obvious incompatibilities of interest among erstwhile allies. Instead of fine and timely adjustments of alignment in order to maintain a status quo that is, itself, shifting, realignments are delayed until manageable conflicts of interest become intractable because statesmen have taken overextended positions and invested them with affect (in most cases, what in diplomatic history has been referred to as amour-propre).

The outcome of the Crimean War was unrewarding for both Britain and Russia, both of whom largely turned isolationist and abrogated their responsibilities in upholding the status quo on the Continent. The second case study, which comprises the next chapter, examines affective abandonment from the opposite perspective than that of the Crimean War diplomacy. For different reasons, the Conservative Alliance powers of Russia, Austria, and Prussia were humiliated by the conditions imposed by the 1856 Treaty of Paris. Russia turned

---

[5] As the mathematician Strogatz notes, the two most stable states in social networks are both when a nirvana of goodwill exists, and when networks are split into two hostile factions with no cross alignments, respectively. The latter polarized state is the only one as stable as nirvana. See, Stephen Strogatz, "The Enemy of My Enemy," nytimes.com, February 14, 2010. For his purposes, Strogatz is entitled to refer to this characteristic as one of stability, although some systems theorists can find stability in the continuous change of cast of actors such as occur in perfectly competitive economic markets as long as those going out of business are replaced by those entering the market. See, for example, Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (New York: Random House, 1979), p. 162. Nevertheless, while Strogatz equates imbalance with instability, certainty (and uncertainty) seems to be his dynamic of interest.

isolationist and took short-cuts by aligning with France in a secret 1859 treaty to reclaim its losses on the Black Sea in exchange for supporting France's revisionist claims in Italy. Austria feared that its treacherous conduct in maintaining neutrality during the Crimean War, while attempting to insist on opportunistic gains by occupying the Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia), would lead Russia to later take retribution. In consequence, Austria attempted to bolster its insecure position by undermining the federal system upon which Germany was based since 1815. Finally, Prussia adopted neutrality during the Crimean War by hiding behind its federal status. This action caused the other major powers to doubt its continued status as a major power and prejudiced its right to participate at the peace conference. The resulting insecurity prompted Prussia to seek revisionist policies under Chancellor Bismarck.

If Britain and Russia provided each other with vague and confusing reassurances of common interest prior to the Crimean War, Russia and France later worked together to attain their respective interests by disregarding those of others. So did Austria, and Prussia, separately. For opposite reasons, these first two case studies violate the strictures of widespread loss aversion that require the communicated defense of one's interests at the same time that the interests of others are reciprocally to be respected and communicated as such.

The last three chapters regarding affective abandonment largely examine the British abetment of Prussian aggression that resulted in wars against Poland in 1863, Denmark in 1864, Austria in 1866, and France in 1870, respectively.

Poland and Denmark are considered together in the first of these chapters. It is impossible to understand the ease with which Prussia prosecuted wars against Austria and France without examining how Poland and Denmark set the stage for lasting Franco-British estrangement. All of the German case study chapters are straight-forward examples in which Britain is over-deterred by Prussian aggression. Britain had motivated biases to remain neutral due to domestic considerations and the unwarranted belief that a unified Germany would be a liberal bulwark against autocratic Russia.[6] France, and Austria, for their parts, failed to come to each other's assistance, expecting, instead, compensation from Prussia as their individual rewards for maintaining benevolent neutrality. Consequently, Prussia developed motivated reasons to believe that its aggression would go unopposed.[7] In short, Prussia was under-deterred. Both Kennedy and Schroeder recognize the long-term importance of the manner in which German unification was conducted. Neither was the aggression opposed, nor sanctioned

---

[6] Paul W. Schroeder argues this in Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War: The Destruction of the European Concert (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), p. 420. Also see, Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, ibid., p. 65.

[7] Bismarck noted that Britain's agreement to abide by the tribunal findings in the Alabama case regarding the U.S. was a sign of weakness and decadence. See, Karl Hildenbrand, "'British interests' als Staatsräson," 19 Jahrhundert, Mitteilungen der Gessellschaft der Freunde der Universitat Mannheim, vol. 22, no. 2 (1973). Cited in Kennedy, Strategy and Diplomacy 1870-1945, op. cit., p. 21.

after the fact, thus giving German leaders the continued belief that aggression would continue to pay dividends until the outbreak of the First World War.[8]

Specific dynamics of affective abandonment.

One dynamic associated with widespread loss aversion that was largely validated in the previous chapter is that framing of the situation (in particular the use of the insurance premium) is likely to be initially conservative and then more risky when the status quo cannot be maintained.[9] When widespread loss aversion predominates, we see a preference reversal but the reversal is largely telegraphed by the moving state and thus should not necessarily take others by surprise. Moreover, the preference reversal is usually enacted in the form of a

---

[8] See, Kennedy, Strategy and Diplomacy 1870-1945, op. cit., p. 21; Schroeder, "The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure," World Politics, vol. 39, no. 1 (October 1986), p. 9.

[9] As Levy notes, different decision-makers sometimes see an action differently; that is, one may see the action in a conservative light while the other sees it as being risky. See, Jack S. Levy, "Prospect Theory and International Relations: Theoretical Applications and Analytical Problems," in Barbara Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), pp. 135-38. Disinterested party analysis, many times the later judgment of scholarship, can serve as a useful check on such disagreements. Moreover, there is more widespread agreement on the inherent riskiness of a particular political action than is generally supposed when one takes into account the context in which the action is taken. As evidence, even Hitler's generals were appalled at some of his contemplated actions, not because of the large uncertainty concerning success or failure, but because they saw incredible risk where the dictator simply did not. See, Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 52. Luckily, the Hitler mind-set is an aberration, not a commonality, in international relations despite frequent overdrawn Munich analogies. Recall George H.W. Bush invoking the Munich analogy to argue that Saddam Hussein was another Hitler prior to American intervention in the 1991 Gulf War. See, Ann Reilly, "How Bush decided he sees Saddam Hussein as another Hitler," money.cnn/magazine/com/fortune, February 11, 1991.

conditional in order to bring others back into the cooperative fold. In contrast, when affective abandonment is operative, what is of interest is whether a moving state reverses its preference for action regarding the insurance premium based on affect when the status quo has not materially changed but the decision-maker has perceived a detriment in its position.

As noted in Chapter 1, cognitive biases lead decision-makers to draw conclusions regarding action based on what they expect to see. Preferences are merely reinforced and thus should not be subject to abrupt reversal. This may occur either because decision-makers believe that all good things go together, or because systemic dynamics impose like-minded action on all of the major decision-makers, or both.[10]

In contrast, abrupt preference reversals regarding the use of the insurance premium take place when decision-makers are under significant stress not to

---

[10] As analyzed in Chapter 1, decision-makers regret negative outcomes most when they fail to take action when they are in control or believe that they are in control of the situation. When systemic dynamics predominate, decision-makers can recognize or come to believe that they are not in control and, therefore, can disclaim responsibility for their actions. Social scientists have analyzed actor behavior when, for example, they are in the presence of natural disasters, or when participants commit mass suicide, such as occurred during the 1978 Jonestown Massacre by a religious sect in South America. For theory and evidence, see, Frank A. Heller, Decision-making and Leadership (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Robert L. Hamblin, "Group integration during a crisis," Human Relations, vol. 11, no. 1 (February 1958), pp. 67-76; Alexander Mintz, "Non-adaptive group behavior," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, vol. 46, no. 2 (April 1951), pp. 150-59; R.E. Foreman, "Resignation as a collective behavior response," American Journal of Sociology, vol. 69, no. 3 (November 1963), pp. 385-90; Carl A. Hammerschlag and Boris M. Astrachan, "The Kennedy Airport snow-in: an inquiry into intergroup phenomena," Psychiatry, vol. 34, no. 3 (August 1971), pp. 301-08.

sacrifice deeply held values when value loss is quite likely. The insurance premium is thus employed in risky fashion. In extreme cases, the insurance premium can be transformed into a risky long-shot gamble of a lottery ticket. Their decision matrix is based, not on what they expect to see, but rather on what they do not and cannot expect to see. Because this is the case, anticipated negative regret is factored into their decision-making such that significant incidents that do not necessarily change the larger status quo take on unwarranted import and bias preference reversals for action-oriented, rather than inaction-oriented, behavior. Farnham demonstrates that affect is a significant driver of preference reversal.[11] This is not to argue that preference reversals cannot be the result of cognitive biases, but the theoretical argument seems to point towards motivated biases as the root cause.

Changes in framing effects can be the result of gradual changes in the status quo or perceptions of changes in the status quo that are not commonly shared among the major actors. We take for granted that there is a common understanding of the status quo. In reality, this understanding may be deliberately vague in order not to antagonize, but unexpected actions by third parties can force the major actors to more fully clarify their understandings of the status quo, thus revealing intrinsic incompatibilities of interest. One possibility is that interests may still remain quite compatible in the short-term, but that long-term trends will require an exchange of endowments. This is a particularly

---

[11] Farnham, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis: Insights from Prospect Theory," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., pp. 41-71.

thorny problem in meliorating conflict because, while possession of a good has more basis than the future possession of a good or even more basis than the future chance of a possession of a good,[12] the shadow of the future may be quite unkind to the losing state and the potentially gaining state(s) know this.

Related to gradual changes in the status quo is the concept of renormalization. States do not adjust easily to loss, but domestic changes in government can keep revanchism in check or reawaken it in ways that are quite surprising to other states. Moreover, the dynamics of renormalization do not necessarily scale linearly in their international effect. A state that attempts to take back what it lost from another state may induce otherwise status quo third party states to go along with it because the balance of endowments enjoyed by the respective parties has been disturbed because it is being contested.

An interesting possibility is that a mixed lottery obtains in this instance. The experimental literature on prospect theory focuses on choices in the domain of either losses or gains, but not on a combination of the two. Mixed lotteries occur when a particular action produces gains as well as losses. Thus, an otherwise status quo state that engages in revisionist action experiences both positive and negative outcomes.[13]

---

[12] Levy, "Prospect Theory and International Relations," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., p. 125.
[13] Levy, "Prospect Theory and International Relations," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., p. 131.

Diplomacy leading to the outbreak of the Crimean War.

One can scarcely understand the causes of the Crimean War without taking into account the triadic context in which Britain, France, and Russia operated for the twenty five years prior to the conflict over the Holy Places.[14] The following extended inquiry into the motivated biases by the major powers is intended to dispel the received notion that the Crimean War occurred by accident,[15] or, as Morier opined, "[was] the only perfectly useless modern war that has ever been waged."[16] It is true that none of the detailed alignments between the major powers would have necessarily precipitated the outbreak of general conflict, but, as Conacher observes, "[the war] seemed to come about with the inevitability of a Greek tragedy."[17] Moreover, Seton-Watson cogently observes that, "the dispute of the Holy Places was what the Defenestration, the Ems Telegram, or the murder of the Archduke have been to other great wars—in a word, the spark and not the powder magazine."[18]

The 1848 revolutions discussed in the previous chapter were as well managed as could be expected by Britain and Russia, the two steadfastly status

---

[14] J.B. Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition 1852-1855 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 138. Conacher argues that one needs to go back forty years, but I will only trace back twenty five years here.
[15] Matthew S. Anderson, The eastern question 1774-1923: a study in international relations (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966), p. 132.
[16] Robert Morier quoted in J.A.R. Marriott, The Eastern Question, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 249.
[17] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 137.
[18] Robert W. Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 304.

quo powers in Europe.[19] In particular, Palmerston's instruction to Nicholas to aggressively aid Austria in putting down the liberal Kossuth's Hungarian insurrection[20] gave the tsar reason to believe that Britain cared more for order than for liberal change in Europe.[21] As will be shown, these expectations of continued cooperation of an authoritarian sort to manage deterioration of the Ottoman Empire led Nicholas to develop motivated biases of commonality of interest with Britain that were not easily disabused by events leading up to the Crimean War that proved otherwise.

As early as 1844, Nicholas made a state visit to Britain and sounded out the Tories, the prime minister Peel, and the foreign secretary Aberdeen, on various ideas as to how disintegration of the Ottoman Empire should be managed among the major European powers. Turkish decadence regarding unequal treatment of Christians, including sporadic, but frequent enough, massacres; general misrule; corruption; and the unwillingness to engage in administrative reforms despite frequent assurances to do so through written

---

[19] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 64.

[20] Wellington told Brunnow, the Russian ambassador in London, that the force used should be strong enough to crush the revolt with one blow. See, Fedor F. Martens, Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'Empire Ottoman, vol. 2 (Paris, 1897), pp. 254-55. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 266; Ann Pottinger Saab, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance (Charlottsville: University of Virginia Press, 1977), p. 8.

[21] Palmerston knew that he was abetting this motivated bias of the tsar's. To Drouyn de Lhuys, the French ambassador in London, Palmerston stated, "the moderation of the tsar…reassures me poorly. From moderation to moderation he might finish, if one let him have his way, by invading the entire world" (quoted in Drouyn de Lhuys to de Tocqueville, August 22, 1949, Archives des Affaires Etrangères (Paris: Ministèr des Affaires Estrangères)). Cited in Saab, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance, ibid., pp. 8-9.

decrees, or firmans, was well understood by most of the major European powers.[22] Nicholas's various schemes for partition indicated that he had no interest in shutting Britain and Austria out; he preferred an orderly sharing out that respected the various major powers' territorial interests to a deadly scramble by them for pieces of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the tsar was at great pains to make sure that neither the French nor the British controlled Constantinople and that Russian informal predominance in that area remained. French or British control of the warm-water Straits at Constantinople and consequent access to the Black Sea and Russia's southern coast would ensure that Russia would not be able to project its naval power worldwide. As long as non-interference of Russian interests in this regard was respected, Nicholas was amenable to almost any scheme of partition that the other major powers might desire.[23]

Nicholas was also determined to ensure that revolutionary France made no inroads and this motivated bias clouded his better judgment and forced him to take overextended positions that were not easy to draw back from because of his amour-propre.[24] Initially, the tsar welcomed the ascension of Louis Napoleon, but he later drew back when the latter decided to declare himself Emperor of France. Nicholas deliberately insulted the French leader by referring to him as mon cher ami rather than mon frère, the latter salutation which he could only

---

[22] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., pp. 140-41; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 307.
[23] David Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914: A Study in British and Russian Imperialism (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1977), pp. 69-70.
[24] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., pp. 300-27; Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 75.

confer were Louis to have attained his status by divine right rather than by the will of the people. Nicholas was growing ever more autocratic; he failed to understand the dynamics of burgeoning democracy in liberal Britain and France and their effects on public opinion and the degree to which statesmen at least had to pay attention to it, and he continued to believe that gentlemanly agreements between heads of state would continue to suffice to keep the peace.[25]

Louis Napoleon desired to restore the glory of the French Empire; liberalism would submerge itself in nationalism, the new dynamic force in European affairs.[26] Because Russia was the most autocratic state in the Conservative Alliance, France was bound to come into conflict with it. The Holy Places in the Ottoman Empire was one area in which Catholic France might drive a wedge between Catholic Austria and Orthodox Christian Russia in order to stem the growing influence of the tsar throughout Europe.[27] Having repressed the 1848 revolutions, and with Metternich gone, Nicholas could claim to be the arbiter of order in Europe.[28] Curtiss nicely captures the nervous sentiment of the rest of the major European powers by observing that the Gendarme of Europe was cordially hated by all.[29]

---

[25] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 307.
[26]David Wetzel, The Crimean War: A Diplomatic History (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, NY, 1985), p. 23.
[27] Saab, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance, op. cit., p. 10.
[28] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 72.
[29] John Shelton Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1979), p. 39.

Significant friction also made war likely between Britain and both the Americans and the French. Thus, Aberdeen was willing to be reassured by Nicholas's entreaties even though Russian penetration of Persia threatened Britain's routes to India as never before and British conquests in Asia increasingly threatened Russian interests (more of this later). Motivated bias exerted an influence in the British foreign secretary's framing of the fluid situation that Britain was faced with. When cognitive biases dominate thinking, we tend to extrapolate hostility from one actor to another, but just the opposite can occur when we need to believe that the array of friends and foes is manageable in order to maintain cherished values. In so doing, it is easy to overlook intrinsic incompatibilities of interest or to submerge those differences with deliberately vague understandings of the status quo. As evidence, negotiations with the Americans were frustrating; rebels were aided by the Americans against Canadian British rule, but Aberdeen resolved to settle old boundary disputes that hung over from the War of 1812-14 in order to gain leverage.[30] In so doing, Aberdeen deigned to take less over the disposition of Maine and the Oregon Question and he did a good job of framing such concessions with the British public as necessary to maintain the rest of the Empire.[31] Although Britain attempted to discreetly manage American expansion,

[30] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 71.
[31] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 56.

the foreign secretary resolved that American predominance in the Caribbean and Latin America was a foregone conclusion.[32]

Both Louis Napoleon's coup against the Republic and the advent of steam propulsion reawakened the old 18th century fears of French naval invasion of the British homeland.[33] Moreover, the British and the French were at loggerheads over Tahiti, Morocco, Algeria and took opposite sides in the Lebanese civil war of 1841-45. Palmerston's machinations in attempting to secure British interests in the Spanish marriages of Queen Isabella and her sister, the Infanta, raised a dustup with the French that the foreign minister was only too happy to provoke and the French were only too happy to oblige.[34] Moreover, Palmerston's earlier blunt diplomacy in dealing with attempts to install a ruler in Belgium sympathetic to French interests and French aid given to Mehemet Ali during the 1839 Eastern crisis left a lingering estrangement between the British and French which it was Aberdeen's job to try to mend.[35] The new foreign secretary condemned the high price in enmity that the British had to pay for their foreign policy successes: "…Palmerston's assertiveness had not only upset the entente with France, it had also left [Aberdeen] a war with China, the chance of another

---

[32] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 69.
[33] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 71; Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 18.
[34] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., pp. 58-59.
[35] Without the Queen's concurrence, Palmerston congratulated Louis Napoleon on his coup in 1851, thus costing him his job at the Foreign Office. Of this, see, Charles Greville, Henry Reeve, ed., Memoirs, 3rd ed., vol. 6 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1875-77), p. 435; Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 70. Of course, Palmerston would later return to office as prime minister after the fall of Aberdeen's cabinet in 1855.

war with the United States, and, though no one knew it yet, an imminent disaster and a new campaign in Afghanistan."[36] According to Clayton, "the Anglo-French relationship had a special quality of ambiguity in the Louis Philippe and Louis Napoleon era. British governments regarded France with a curious mixture of condescension and fear, seeing her now as a subservient partner, now as a dangerous rival."[37]

It was this ambiguous relationship between Britain and France that Nicholas played upon in order to attempt a deal with the former over the demise of the Ottoman Empire. First, the tsar was emboldened by the belief codified at Münchengrätz (later shown to be incorrect), that Austria would act as one with Russian interests. He then clearly engaged in a bit of wishful thinking in believing that Britain could be separated from France by the prospect of territorial gains. Yet, Nicholas never made clear, nor did he likely know himself, whether the projected demise of the Ottoman Empire was a foregone conclusion and therefore needed to be managed, or whether it might be in Russia's interest to precipitate that demise.[38] Nicholas fundamentally could not understand

---

[36] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 47.
[37] G.D. Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question: Missolonghi to Gallipoli (London: University of London Press, 1971), p. 94.
[38] For an example of Nicholas's belief that the Ottoman Empire needed to be liquidated, see, Nicholas V. Riasonovsky, Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 264. For too simple a gloss that the tsar never intended to proceed on his own and was always respectful of the other major powers' interests in the Ottoman Empire, see, Gordon Craig, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in C.P.T. Bury, ed., The New Cambridge Modern History, vol. 10: The Zenith of European Power 1830-70 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 266-67.

Britain's complex of interests: first, that Britain had an interest in the continuation of the Ottoman Empire; second, that it agreed that an orderly partition should take place should the Empire disintegrate; but, finally, that it would oppose any Russian effort to promote that disintegration.[39] Thus, while Aberdeen was relieved to be reassured by Russian overtures for peaceful accommodation and he did make clear that Britain would not enter into an alliance or even a 'clear understanding' regarding a mere contingency, Nicholas came away with the notion that Britain would not oppose a Russian defense of its interests as it saw fit regarding the Eastern Question.[40] Both Peel and Aberdeen deluded themselves into believing that their collective viewpoint would impress upon the tsar their belief in the continued viability of the Ottoman Empire.[41] Moreover, little was done to disabuse Nicholas of his motivated bias as the Russian foreign minister Nesselrode's later memorandum of the royal's conversation was clumsily affirmed by Aberdeen when he expressed "much pleasure to find that no differences exist respecting the accuracy of your statement."[42] Although this document was deposited at the Foreign Office, not released publicly, but passed on from government to government, the British considered it to be little more than a moral obligation on individual ministers to manage the possible disintegration of the Ottoman

---

[39] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 82.
[40] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
[41] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 29.
[42] Serge Goriainov, "The Secret Agreement of 1844 between Russia and Great Britain," Russian Review, vol. 1, no. 3 and no. 4 (1912), pp. 85-115 and pp. 76-91.

Empire whereas the tsar believed it to be a solemn binding pledge between sovereign governments.[43] Henderson captures the problem of mutual motivated biases: "if Nicholas was singularly willing to deceive himself, the British Ministers were singularly unwilling to undeceive him."[44]

At the same time the tsar paid his visit to London, the British and the Russians were encroaching on each other's imperial interests. This should have raised mutual alarm, as it did in the 1830s, but both sides now wishfully believed that the other was only securing its legitimate claims. Two related dynamics were debated in Parliament and similar arguments were made in Russian foreign policy circles. The first dynamic was that of the 'uncontrollable principle' and the other was the 'turbulent frontier' argument. As elaborated by Peel in the House of Commons regarding the brutality of Charles Napier in his annexation of the Sind, "whatever may be the principle which may regulate the conduct of civilized nations when coming into contact with each other, when civilization and barbarism come into contact there is some uncontrollable principle of a very different description, which demands a different course of conduct to be pursued."[45] Peel was constantly importuned by regional security experts on the spot to take aggressive steps to secure British imperial interests; thus, the 'turbulent frontier' was the necessity of annexing territories that abutted British

---

[43] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, vol. cxxxii, p. 156; Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 140; Stuart J. Reid, Lord John Russell (London: Sampson, Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., 1895), pp. 216-17.
[44] Gavin B. Henderson, Crimean War Diplomacy and Other Historical Essays (Glasgow: Jackson, Sons & Co., 1947), p. 11.
[45] Hansard, vol. lxxxii, op. cit., pp. 443-44.

interests in order to quell native violence.[46] There seemed to be no end to the expansion and Peel was keenly aware that this was vitiating British power rather than increasing it. Privately, he expressed to Hardinage,

> "consider that the annexation of the Punjab would have been a source of weakness and not of strength; that it would have extended our frontier at the greatest distance from our resources, and at the weakest points; that it would have been a perpetual blister, from bringing us into contact with new tribes, unused to our sway, unconscious of its advantages, unable to appreciate the benefits of government on settled principles; that you would have been with reference to Afghanistan and all the bordering countries in a much worse position than you were in September last with reference of the Punjab, at a greater distance from your resources, with a hostile country and difficult rivers in your rear."[47]

Both the 'uncontrollable principle' and the 'turbulent frontier' thesis were not grand strategies, but rather default options that needed to be taken because of anticipated negative regret in failing to take action when one was believed to be in control of the situation.[48] Thus, although a projected alliance system with

---

[46] Analyzed in Jack L. Snyder, Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 166-74.
[47] Charles S. Parker, ed., Sir Robert Peel, From his Private Papers, vol. 3 (New York: Krauss Reprint Co., [1899] 1970), pp. 311-13.
[48] Twenty years later, Gorchakov, the Russian foreign minister, lamented that

> "the state is thus forced to choose between two alternatives—either to give up this endless labor, and to abandon its frontiers to perpetual disturbances, or to plunge deeper and deeper into barbarous countries, where the difficulties and expenses increase with every step in advance. Such has been the fate of every country which has found itself in a similar position. The United States of America, France in Algeria, Holland in her colonies, England in India; all have been forced by imperious necessity into this onward march, where the greatest difficulty is to know where to stop" (1866 Gorchakov memorandum, cited in Alexis S. Krausse, Russia in Asia: A Record and a Study, 1558-1899 (London: G. Richards, 1899), pp. 224-25).

Afghanistan, the Sind and the Punjab was scrapped, the northwest frontier was nevertheless occupied to the edge of the Indian strategic frontier that abutted Russia, the Hindu Kush.[49]

Russia, in turn, made inroads into Asia that surely would have alarmed Palmerston in the past, but even he had motivated biases to believe that his deterrence polices of the earlier decade were justified. As foreign minister he took significant criticism in European capitals for overdramatizing the Russian threat during the tsar's efforts to manage the Eastern Question in 1839. Thus, a more conciliatory stance gave the impression that Palmerston's policies were bearing fruit, when, in fact, despite Nicholas's reassurances, British interests were threatened as never before. Russian troops conquered the Kazakhs and pushed eastward on the steppes from the Caspian Sea to threaten Khiva and other khanates of Central Asia, thus, threatening India.[50] Defeat in the First Afghan War forced the British out of Kabul and Nicholas was only too happy to cooperate to prevent new attacks on Herat in 1842. Russian helpfulness did not come cheap to the British as it allowed the Russians the opportunity to consolidate their gains in Central Asia.[51]

"While the two empires were natural rivals in Asia, an Anglo-Russian entente existed which Nicholas furthered by every courteous attention to Great

---

[49] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 72.
[50] Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer and the Hon. Evelyn Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 5 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1876), pp. 25-26.
[51] James A. Norris, The First Afghan War, 1838-1842 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 434-35.

Britain."[52] In consequence, both states were remarkably unworried about each other's creeping imperialism as it affected their vital interests. In effect, they were engaging in mutual conciliatory affective abandonment. Nicholas wanted to make his informal predominance of the Ottoman Empire as inoffensive to Britain and Austria as possible. Continued autocratic despotism through the Conservative Alliance was his lifework and Nicholas was determined to ensure that revolutionary France did not bring down that edifice.[53] It wasn't that Nicholas failed to anticipate the implications that a conciliatory policy toward Britain and Austria might have on French motivations to make imperialistic inroads in North Africa and the Levant. That hand had been played long ago, but the tsar believed that his secret agreements, both with Britain, and Austria, respectively, would isolate France, and thus leave it manageable to deal with.[54]

Nicholas could perhaps be forgiven for failing to anticipate that Austrian and Russian interests were not identical. Schwarzenberg, the Austrian foreign minister, readily accepted the tsar's help in putting down the revolutions in

---

[52] Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 33. It should be noted that Curtiss takes a slightly different view of the situation than does Gillard. Instead of mutually encroaching on each other's interests, Curtiss argues that Russia was unable to project its military power in Central Asia, thus leaving the field largely open to British expansion (pp. 35-36). This can only have made the tsar more careful to avoid antagonizing the British.

[53] Nicholas exaggerated the threat from France despite Napoleon's ideas for using nationalism as a lever to create a United States of Europe. Practicalities outran realities; what Napoleon really needed were diplomatic, not military, victories, respectively, to keep the Second Republic from crumbling. See, Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 23, 45; Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 107.

[54] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 80; Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 31.

Hungary, and later, in Germany. But occupation of the Principalities, however temporary, was alarming to Austria. Thus, Nicholas failed to see that Austria wanted to be relieved of its dependency on Russia and that the Conservative Alliance was dead. Austria was in such a parlous state; it was feared that both revolution and repression (another Russian occupation) alike would cause Austria to disintegrate. Schwarzenberg's famous prediction that Austria would soon amaze the world by the enormity of her ingratitude, would later leave Nicholas sputtering that "the two most foolish Kings of Poland were Sobieski and I, who helped Austria."[55]

Nicholas also failed to realize that Britain never could decide for itself whether France or Russia was its primary enemy.[56] Despite its revolutionary proclamations, France had, for all intents and purposes, become a kindred soul of liberal Britain.[57] Moreover, France was much more of a threat to Russian autocracy as a law-abiding member of the community of nations than it was as a

---

[55] Heinrich Friedjung, Der Krimkrieg und die österreichische Politik (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1911), pp. 102-6, 126. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 333.

[56] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 96; Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 17.

[57] Palmerston was not alarmed at Lamartine's 1848 circular denouncing the validity of the Vienna settlement. He realized that the new French government had to make such a proclamation; furthermore, Palmerston received assurances from the foreign minister that it was made for public consumption and did not reflect considered French policy. See, Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 64. Aberdeen, a conservative Tory, was more predisposed than was Palmerston, a liberal Whig, to see an existential threat from France.

revolutionary outlaw.[58] Thus, Britain interjected a good deal of uncertainty into this triadic relationship by keeping all options open and only allying with one against the other as the immediate situation dictated.[59] Theoretically, while imbalanced alignments tend to promote uncertainty as to who will ally with whom,[60] it can be argued that such uncertainty promotes caution among the major actors.[61] But when imbalanced alignments combine, and in a sense, are reciprocally influenced by, motivated biases, the system can be one of dangerous uncertainty even as the major actors are convinced of the rectitude of their beliefs. Unfortunately, the Russians and the French read much more commonality of interest into their individual relations with Britain and the latter insufficiently communicated the limits of its diplomatic assistance to both states. Likely it did not know what it wanted to do other than to buy time.[62] All three states suffered from a strong motivated bias to believe that its ally of the moment had its interests at heart and it is quite possible that better communication of intent would still not have disabused any major power of the bias.

Aside from the more tactical reasons by the tsar for keeping Russian predominance in the Ottoman Empire deliberately inoffensive, a larger problem

---

[58] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 95.
[59] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 90.
[60] See, comments at fn. 5.
[61] A competition in reasonableness between states that ally with each other for alignment with the recently defeated third state so as to prevail on the next issue of contention can also be viewed as exercising caution in the face of uncertainty. On the former dynamic, see, Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Paul Lauren, ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: Free Press, 1979), p. 224.
[62] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 30.

bulked in the minds of both the Russians and the British and it was never discussed because doing so would have revealed the deep incompatibilities associated with their respective interests. Nicholas read much more into Russian informal predominance than the western powers would allow. The tsar believed his informal predominance to have the same juridical status as that of a recognized territorial border to be respected by all. In contrast, the western powers saw Russian predominance as an obvious fact of the moment, but not necessarily immutable and thus subject to whittling away through a progression of inroads to be made.[63] One impetus for this feeling is that the terms of trade with Turkey were quite favorable to Britain and increasing as the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 brought cheap foodstuffs to an increasingly industrialized British workforce. In turn, the Turks bought British manufactures whereas Russia erected high tariff barriers to outside trade and sought a closed system with Turkey because its serfs were poor and thus unattractive as a target for competitive trade.[64] During a speech in the House of Commons in 1849, Palmerston cited this increased trade as one reason why Britain intended to compete with Russia over the Ottoman Empire,[65] but it is difficult to know whether this was a primary impetus.[66] Similar arguments were made, and then

---

[63] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., pp. 78-79.
[64] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 15; Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 91.
[65] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 90.
[66] Schroeder does not believe so because Palmerston developed bad relations with the Austrians and there was no trade competition in the Balkans with them. See, Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 414-15.

refuted, regarding rising French economic interests throughout Europe and the Levant in threatening to overthrow the Vienna Settlement.[67]

Of importance is that perceptions regarding the status quo were changing, but these perceptions were not mutually shared. In fact, until the outbreak of the Crimean War, both Russia and the western powers had identical interests in the 1841 Straits Convention that mandated closure to warships while Turkey was at peace. All benefited from the maintenance of free navigation for the purpose of commerce and this happy commonality of interests masked the deeper undercurrents of discontent. Not only were perceptions in long-term shifts in the status quo not shared, but the implications from incidents that might have forced a reckoning were fitted to different preconceived notions. Palmerston read into Russian abandonment of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi hope for British interests

---

The free-trader Cobden strangely believed that Russian predominance would raise up Turkish culture and thus make it more attractive as a trading partner. See, Peter Cain, "Capitalism, War, and Internationalism in the Thought of Richard Cobden," British Journal of International Studies, vol. 5 (October 1979), p. 236; Louis Mallet, ed., The Political Writings of Richard Cobden (London: W. Ridgway, 1878), pp. 103-8). The impetus for the largely economic argument is advocated by Vernon J. Puryear, International Economics and Diplomacy in the Near East, 1834-53 (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1935); —England, Russia, and the Straits Question, 1844-56 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1931). More recent analyses by Clayton and Conacher argue that Puryear's ideas are stimulating if sometimes unreliable. See, Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 90; Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 137, fn. 1. Still, prior to the outbreak of the war, Britain was Russia's biggest supplier in machine tools and Russia was Britain's biggest supplier of grain. See, Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 77. Thus, both sides had economic interests to avoid provoking each other. Coupled with Schroeder's opinion and the fact that Palmerston during this period later developed severely motivated biases for conflict with Russia, the economic reason could easily serve as a rationalization for a policy taken for other reasons.

[67] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 20.

in the future, but the tsar perceived insufficient success to give him any cause for alarm. Although Stratford de Redcliffe, the British ambassador at Constantinople from 1842-52, was a minor kingmaker in Turkish circles due to a diplomatic style similar to Palmerston's, and he continued the latter's goal of westernizing Turkey under British tutelage to serve as a bulwark to Russian expansion, the promotion of British reforms contributed much to social disturbances and consequent Muslim backlash in the region.[68]

In 1849 the British had just annexed the Punjab with Russian approval and the Hungarians were suppressed in Austria with Nicholas's aid and British approval.[69] But a much less spectacular incident should have revealed to the tsar that Russia and Britain were not of a mind. The Austrians and Russians went too far in demanding from the Porte extradition of Polish and Hungarian rebels involved in the uprising. The Turks refused and the British and French

---

[68] The first movement was to centralize Turkish rule as well as to secularize it by severing the religious link between the Sultan and subject and replace it with a strictly political one. The British attempted to do away with the millet system, which, heretofore, gave local notables political power through religious mediation. The other movement was to give Christians equality with Muslims. The British had little skin in the game; they distrusted French Catholicism, but had little Protestant representation in the Ottoman Empire. Predictably, both reform attempts were met with violent backlash by Muslims. Neither were the French pleased; thus, British action made as many enemies as it did friends in the region. See, Allan Cunningham, "Stratford and the Tanzimat," in William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers, eds., Beginnings of Moderization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 257-58; Sherif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 175-95; Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 79.

[69] B. Kingsley Martin, The Triumph of Lord Palmerston (London: Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1924), pp. 29-30.

supported their position. Palmerston believed that the Hapsburg Empire needed to be maintained at all costs in order to maintain stability in eastern Europe even as he privately sympathized with revolutionaries, such as Kossuth.[70] Moreover, he believed that Austria and Russia were bluffing in lodging such extreme demands.[71] Thus, concerning Austria and Russia, Palmerston cautioned Stratford, "in this affair we are trying to catch two great fish, and we must wind the reel very gently and dexterously, not to break the line."[72] To Russell, Palmerston later confided, "with a little manly firmness we shall get successfully through this matter."[73] Nevertheless, during a joint Franco-British naval demonstration, the British fleet sailed into Besika Bay just outside of the Dardanelles.[74] Perpetually an inconsistent if not unfaithful servant of the Crown, Stratford encouraged the fleet to stray nearer to Constantinople, thus technically violating the 1841 Straits Convention.[75] Tempers flared, but the tsar cancelled his

---

[70] Herbert C.F. Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., [1936] 1966), pp. 26-28.
[70] Alan Palmer, The Chancelleries of Europe (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983), p. 13.
[71] Saab, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance, op. cit., p. 9.
[72] Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 4, op. cit., pp. 150-53.
[73] Palmerston to Russell, September 29, 1849, in George P. Gooch, ed., The Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, 1840-1878 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1925), vol. 2, p. 9; Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., p. 263.
[74] Charles Sproxton, Palmerston and the Hungarian Revolution (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1919), pp. 126-27.
[75] The role of Stratford in igniting the sparks that set off the Crimean War has been intensely debated. Seton-Watson believes that the failure of Aberdeen to relieve Stratford from his post was causal, while Temperley finds that, while Stratford did not faithfully urge the Turks to exercise restraint in the face of

demand for extradition at the behest of the Sultan while Palmerston apologized for the naval infraction.[76]

According to Gillard,

> "to all appearances the atmosphere of mutual understanding had been severely tested and triumphantly preserved. In fact, all the crisis had done was to reinforce the wishful thinking of both governments. Palmerston could reasonably believe that the Russian emperor had backed down before a discreet display of force. Nicholas had gracefully given way on an issue more important to the Austrians than to himself and could feel that the basic soundness of the Russian position in the area had been demonstrated. The Sultan's direct appeal to him showed Turkish recognition of their special relationship with St. Petersburg, while Palmerston's anxiety to reassure him about the Straits looked more significant to Nicholas than the precautionary movement of the British squadron, and helped the emperor to go on believing in a special Russo-British relationship over the Ottoman Empire. The easy resolution of the crisis obscured from Nicholas the reasons for British hostility and from Palmerston the strength of Russian determination about the Ottoman Empire."[77]

Russian provocations, he worked tirelessly at the eleventh hour to keep war from breaking out. The original argument concerning Stratford's culpability, not fully dispelled by more recent scholarship, was made by Alexander W. Kinglake, The Invasion of the Crimea: Its Origin and Account of Its Progress Down to the Death of Lord Raglan, 6th ed., 9 vols. (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood & Sons, 1877). Also see, Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., pp. 313-14. For a similar viewpoint see, Frederick A. Simpson, Louis Napoleon and the Recovery of France 1848-1856 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1923), pp. 230-36. For dissenting viewpoints see, Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., pp. 339-41; Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 163.

[76] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 41; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 265-68.

[77] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 77. This argument was originally largely made by Puryear in England, Russia, and the Straits Question, op. cit., pp. 171-88. Conacher believes that this incident had the effect of making the 1844 Anglo-Russian secret agreement null and void and that the tsar understood this to be so. In this I am in agreement with the opinions of both Puryear, and Gillard, respectively, and not with that of Conacher. As noted, Nicholas had a predilection for gentlemen's agreements and was enamored with statesmen of high caliber who could carry a cabinet with them. It is not surprising that a despot could come to terms with liberalism only by assuming

Two important incidents prior to the crisis over the Holy Places further confirmed in Nicholas's mind both that the western powers would not oppose him in the Ottoman Empire and that Turkey could be cowed into doing his bidding. First, in 1850, while Palmerston's bullying during the Don Pacifico incident alarmed Nicholas, it also caused a rupture between the French and the British such that the tsar believed they could no longer ally with each other. Recall that the British, French, and Russians jointly oversaw Greece as an independent state since 1832. Pacifico, born in Gibraltar, and therefore a British subject, petitioned the Greek government for damages to his private property. Greek obstreperousness towards Pacifico awakened the British who earlier had

---

that the great man theory still operated to override the untidiness of democratic politics. Thus, despite inconstant enmity, Nicholas believed that he and Palmerston could coordinate their opinions when necessary. Although friendly with Aberdeen, the tsar believed him to be a lesser statesman than Palmerston. Nicholas was correct, but he failed to understand the implication of this fact. The reassignment of Palmerston to the home office gave the tsar reason to believe that a renewed effort to make a deal with the British in 1852 (the Seymour conversations) over the disposition of the Ottoman Empire would bear fruit. See, Reid, Lord John Russell, op. cit., p. 214; Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 141. But, Nicholas failed to realize that British foreign policy still ran through Palmerston. Nevertheless, there is an unbroken continuity between the 1844 and 1852 solicitations of Britain by Nicholas. According to Henderson, the tsar was not a 'plotter', but a 'blunderer'. See, Henderson, Crimean War Diplomacy and Other Historical Essays., op. cit., p. 11. As evidence, according to Clayton, "Nicholas would have been wise to remember the line taken by Britain during this 1849 crisis. He might not have so unfortunately misjudged the probabilities in 1854" (Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 99). The opinions of Henderson, and Clayton, respectively, seem to indicate that Nicholas suffered from a severe motivated bias to believe that a special relationship existed between Russia and Britain, when, in fact, there was little rational basis for this belief.

half-heartedly supported his claim. The British fleet was recalled from the Salamis to Athens and blockaded the southern coast of Greece until Pacifico received satisfaction.[78] In turn, the Greeks appealed to the French and Russians for assistance. Although the crisis was resolved peaceably, the French recalled ambassador Thouvenel from London. Both France and Russia protested both an intolerable threat of the use of force as well as the fact that, as fellow guarantors of Greek sovereignty, they were not consulted beforehand.[79] In defending his actions, Palmerston engaged in a bit of chauvinism, giving a speech to Parliament in which he asserted the right of the British abroad to unqualified respect redolent of citizenry during the heyday of the Roman Empire.[80]

Nicholas took from this crisis the realization that he could not operate alone in the Ottoman Empire. While the British were preferred partners, Palmer rightly notes that Nicholas began to believe that he might be able to do business with France: "there was nothing wrong with Louis Napoleon as head of state provided he forgot to be a Bonaparte."[81] Unfortunately, the tsar continued to believe that, in any contemplated alignment, he could continue to call the tune.[82]

The second incident, occurring in 1851, concerns an Austrian mission that inflicted a humiliation on the Porte, and thus gave Nicholas reason to believe that he could easily dictate Russian foreign policy to the Sultan in the future. A

---

[78] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 34-35.
[79] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 101.
[80] Jasper Ridley, Lord Palmerston (London: Constable & Co., 1970), p. 387; Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 26-28.
[81] Palmer, The Chancelleries of Europe, op. cit., p. 95.
[82] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 38.

change in succession in Montenegro prompted a change of protocol (the offices of the Prince and the Metropolitan were to be separated and Danilo declared himself hereditary lay prince) which, in turn, was treated as a violation of Turkish suzerainty. The Turks sent an army to oppose the Montenegrins while Franz Joseph dispatched Leiningen to Constantinople and successfully faced down the Sultan with an ultimatum to cease and desist. Austrian prestige was enhanced, but more importantly, Nicholas saw the incident as precedent setting for Russian interests.[83]

It is time to take stock of the nature of the imbalanced alignments that had taken place prior to the outbreak of the Crimean War. Both Britain and Russia engaged in mutual affective abandonment of clarified strategic interests with each other for different reasons. Britain needed to believe that it was reassured by Russian peacefulness because the former might find itself at war with both France and the United States regardless of whether it proceeded cautiously or not. Thus, collecting an additional great power enemy was not in British interests. Britain also developed motivated biases to believe that the Ottoman Empire was not decadent and could rehabilitate itself because it was always happy to maintain the status quo there provided that everyone else did the work to prop it up.[84] Russia wanted to keep France from making gains over the projected demise of the Ottoman Empire and thus needed Austria and Britain in

---

[83] Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., p. 307; Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 91; Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 40.
[84] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 98.

its camp. Moreover, the tsar blindly believed that Austria was a mere auxiliary of Russia and that Turkey was its lackey. Nicholas drew the wrong conclusion from British bullying of Greece; not that Britain would oppose Russia in the Ottoman Empire, but that France and Britain could no longer ally with one another to Russia's benefit. Finally, Napoleon's desideratum was to ally with Britain in order to gain victories for himself in the Mediterranean in order to restore the prestige of the French Empire and to diminish the growing influence of Russia throughout Europe.[85]

French aggression, Russian restraint, and British non-committance.

In 1852 the Second Republic was on the verge of collapse. In one of history's many ironies, in order to maintain himself, Louis Napoleon allied with conservative clerics in France by launching a revolutionary policy in the Ottoman Empire.[86] Since the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte, France had lost its influence in the Mediterranean, but it never reconciled itself to the new status quo that had been in effect for nearly forty years. Employing the argot of prospect theory, France was unable to renormalize itself for such loss, or so thought the British

---

[85] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 80.

[86] As early as 1850, Napoleon resolved such assistance, but needed a crisis to force his hand. The coup at the end of 1851 and his coronation at the end of 1852 increased his freedom of maneuver. As if to foreshadow his later prevarication, Napoleon wished to be relieved of an adventurous foreign policy in the Holy Places at the same time that events there overtook him. See, Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 39-40, 45; Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 104.

and the Russians (more of this later). Thus, "in his endless search for prestige,"[87] Napoleon was determined to reassert Catholic influence abroad. He upstaged Nicholas by asserting the rights of Latins to the Turks over Russian Orthodox Christians regarding the Holy Places. Specifically, Napoleon demanded the keys to the inner and outer churches at Bethlehem.[88]

The French were clearly opportunistic. Despite arguments based on religious claims dating as far back as 1535; a 1690 firman granting the Latins dominant standing at the churches in Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem; and a 1740 Turko-French treaty giving Latins preference over their Greek antagonists, this superiority was largely annulled as Russian pilgrims poured into the Holy Land during the 1840s. As a practicality, twelve million Christians trumped the rights of only 300,000 Latins. Moreover, although the Pope named a patriarch to Jerusalem, the job was largely functionary and the patriarch lived in Rome failing even to attend to the interests of his designated See.[89]

Nicholas countered French claims by invoking the vague and generalized concessions given to Russia by the Turks through the 1774 Treaty of Kutchuk Kainardji. This treaty, reaffirmed at Bucharest in 1812, at Akerman in 1826, at

---

[87] A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 49.
[88] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 104.
[89] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

Adrianople in 1829, and at Unkiar Skelessi in 1833, respectively, gave the tsar the right to protect Christians and Christian churches in the Holy Places.[90]

Both an international commission as well as a special commission composed of Turkish legal scholars and Ottoman bureaucrats, respectively, examined the conflicting claims. Not surprisingly, both Russia and France disputed the contradictory findings of the two commissions when they failed to support their respective interests.[91] Napoleon bolted. Blatantly violating the Straits Convention, the French ambassador Lavelette arrived in Constantinople in early 1852 aboard the Charlemagne, a new screw-driven, 90-gun battleship. Later that year, the French threatened to bombard Tripoli on the pretext that they needed to reclaim several deserters.[92] Such gunboat diplomacy impressed the Sultan and he relented to the French demands.

The Russians sustained a diplomatic defeat at the hands of the French in an area of presumed Russian predominance. Nicholas believed that he would have to react in order to stem the decline of his influence. Nevertheless, he initially exercised restraint. In early 1853, despite Nesselrode's pleading to

---

[90] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 303. The conflicting demands made by the French and the Russians of the Turks over the churches also dealt with the right to rebuild a cupola and to install their own security guards at the church doors during preferred times at which to say Mass. As usual, French Catholics and Russian Orthodox Christians would continue to share the churches with each other. At this level of specificity, this was an uninteresting dispute to the Sultan between the French and the Russians that he could easily have disposed of had the two European powers been able to come to terms with one another and not ratcheted up their demands. For details, see, Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 84-106.

[91] Saab, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance, op. cit., p. 12.

[92] Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

refrain from doing so, the tsar sounded out on a number of occasions Seymour, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, in a manner reminiscent of his 1844 conversations with Aberdeen. Again, the tsar attempted to make a deal with the British over the projected demise of the Ottoman Empire. He reiterated that Constantinople not fall into British or French hands, that it perhaps become a free city. The British could have Egypt and possibly Crete.[93] Sure to awaken Austrian suspicions, Nicholas later declared that Russia should occupy the Principalities even though he initially stated that only a temporary occupation might be necessary.[94]

Again, the British were cool to his entreaty. Seymour was a sounding board for Nicholas's ideas without offering anything in return regarding British intentions. Thus, the present foreign secretary, Russell, wrote a cordial, but non-committal, letter to the tsar, based on Seymour's faithful report of the conversation. Predictably, Nicholas was pleased, thus reinforcing his motivated bias that he had a free hand in dealing with the French in the Ottoman Empire.[95] Two reasons likely convinced him that this was the case. First, unlike Palmerston, Aberdeen was much more distrusting of French intentions not to overthrow the Vienna Settlement. Thus, the tsar believed that an Anglo-French combination against Russia with Aberdeen as prime minister was more unlikely

---

[93] The tsar intended Egypt and Crete as bait in order to interest Britain. See, Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., p. 276.
[94] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 306.
[95] Henderson, Crimean War Diplomacy, op. cit., pp. 1-144; Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., pp. 272-79.

than one with Palmerston calling the shots.[96] Second, Russell blundered in affirming to Nicholas the right of a Russian protectorate over Christians in the Ottoman Empire by making an oblique reference to the Treaty of Kutchuk Kainardji.[97] Thus, Russell's dilatory reply cemented in Nicholas's mind precisely the opposite of what he intended. Instead of making clear that the British did not believe that the Ottoman Empire was in danger of collapsing and that the status quo was to be maintained, Nicholas saw approval for a Russian free hand without interference.[98]

The Seymour conversations caused no stir within the British cabinet. (This would later change with the unfortunate leak of those conversations for public consumption, contributing in part to a preference reversal by Aberdeen to make

---

[96] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 50.

[97] Russell's secret and confidential dispatch no. 38 to G. Hamilton Seymour, February 9, 1853. Draft in Public Records Office, London, foreign office 65/420; Parliamentary Papers, 1854, lxxi, pp. 840-42. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 70.

[98] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 48. Of importance, Russell wrote the tsar,

> "[the British government] renounces all intention or desire to possess Constantinople, and His Imperial Majesty can be perfectly reassured on this point." Moreover, Britain would make no determination about the fall of the Ottoman Empire "without first having concerted ahead of time with the Emperor of Russia." In response, Nicholas's marginal comment reads: "this is a precious assurance, for it proves the perfect identity of intentions that exists between England and Russia." Moreover, Nicholas believed that it would be easy for him to take precautions to prevent "what neither England nor Russia can ever permit" (Andrei M. Zaionchkovskii, Vostochnaia voina v sviazi s sovrememnoi ei politicheskoi abstanovki, 4 vols. (St. Petersburg: Ekspedit s ii a zagotoviennii a gos bumag, 1908), Prilozheniia, vol. 1, p. 361). Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 71.

the dispute over the Holy Places a major power war).[99] None in the cabinet initially believed that a European war over the Ottoman Empire was worthwhile, regardless of whether it survived or not. Moreover, Aberdeen was becoming increasingly convinced that the Ottoman Empire would become partitioned without an agreement with Russia, and perhaps Austria, to prevent it. The tsar had a right to damages for Turkish duplicity; the British government rebuffed French overtures and worked instead to persuade the Turks to grant Russia its demands.[100] In short, France was clearly seen to be in the wrong and the tsar stood on firm ground.

Emboldened by the Austrian success of the Leiningen mission, and finding endless negotiations unrewarding, Nicholas sent the arrogant and indiscreet Menshikov to intimidate the Sultan into revoking the firman granting new privileges to the French. The special envoy deliberately snubbed the Turkish foreign minister, Fuad, by failing to call on him, thus forcing the latter's prompt resignation. The immediate appointment of the mediocre Rifaat in Fuad's stead gave Menshikov the belief that the new appointee "envisages the interests of his country in their true light."[101] Personalities matter because sending Orlov, a brilliant, distinguished diplomat and military figure prominent during the fall of

---

[99] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 103.
[100] Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 80-81.
[101] Menshikov to Nesselrode, February 25, 1853, Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, section x, carton 38, Vienna. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 93.

Napoleon in 1815, in Menshikov's stead would likely have smoothed the situation.[102]

It has been argued that Nicholas's aggressive posture with the Menshikov mission destroyed the standing of the non-interventionists within the Aberdeen cabinet allowing the aggressive militarism of Palmerston and Russell to carry the day.[103] This is largely true, but it is important to remember that the cabinet members most engaged in the issue—Russell (leader of the House of Commons), Clarendon (foreign secretary), Palmerston (home secretary), and Aberdeen (prime minister)—had long experience in dealing with Ottoman Empire crises and viewed with varying degrees of suspicion Russian intentions there.[104] While the divisions within the cabinet look undignified, they were appropriate enough at a time when the intentions of the Russians were likely unclear to the Russian government itself.[105] Russell was quite wrong in arguing to the prime minister that the government would fall had they adopted the latter's undiluted policy of conciliating Russia.[106] Gladstone, chancellor of the exchequer, retrospectively observed that the cabinet was not rent by divisions and that he had never served

---

[102] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 142; Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 51.
[103] See, for instance, Susan Peterson, "The Domestic Politics of Crisis Bargaining and the Origins of the Crimean War," in Jack Snyder and Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), Chapter 5.
[104] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 138; Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 82.
[105] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 87.
[106] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55 (London: Colombo, 1885), pp. 61-62.

in a government where there was less dissension.[107] This may have been precisely the problem as most of the cabinet members preferred to compromise their differences with muddled foreign policy rather than to allow the government to dissolve. The results were unfortunate. Aberdeen ultimately failed to control his cabinet as well as his diplomats in the field. Moreover, he did a poor job of explaining his Russian policy to the public and thus allowed rising hostility towards the tsar to increasingly frame the situation. Palmerston was complicit in whipping up British public opinion and then used it in order to hijack foreign policy from Aberdeen. Thus, the Aberdeen coalition appears incompetent only in retrospect.[108]

Initially, Aberdeen had significant room for maneuver. Russell was initially hissed at by the rest of the cabinet for raising doubts as to the sincerity of the tsar in tamping down the crisis even as evidence of the Menshikov mission was being parsed.[109] Palmerston was more circumspect, observing that "the Emperor of Russia is ambitious and grasping, but he is a gentleman and I should be slow to disbelieve his positive denial of such things as those in question."[110] Aberdeen deplored Menshikov's tactlessness, but the prime minister blamed

---

[107] John Morley, The Life of William Ewart Gladstone, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1903), p. 495.
[108] For a pessimistic view, see, Muriel E. Chamberlain, Lord Aberdeen (Cardiff: GPC, 1983), p. 531. Nevertheless, although there was no individual as politically brilliant as Peel, there were more men of high ability in Aberdeen's cabinet than almost any ministry of the last century. See, Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 328.
[109] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 48.
[110] Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., p. 270.

Turkey's ineptness and believed it to be a weak and useless partner. While he had a sense that the Russian demands might be humiliating, Aberdeen asserted that "there is nothing whatever to justify the reproach of territorial aggression, or hostile ambition."[111]

While Nicholas believed that Russia was merely seeking to redress a legitimate grievance, and while Aberdeen agreed with him, the tsar failed to understand that Aberdeen also saw resistance to Russia as impracticable.[112] Moreover, popular Russophobia in Britain at this time was latent at best; only hot-house intellectuals noisily expostulated it.[113] Still, surprisingly, Nicholas overreached by ratcheting up his demands beyond a restoration of the status quo. On a return visit, Menshikov was instructed to demand future compliance by the Sultan that no more disturbances of this kind would take place.[114] Moreover, a firman confirming such assurance would be insufficient; a convention (or sened) was demanded.[115] In effect, Nicholas wanted to make the Sultan cede to him political control of twelve million Christians within the latter's territorial purview. Whereas the Austrian demands were brutal, but limited, Nicholas was demanding Turkish subservience to Russia in perpetuity, a demand to which no major European power would ever accede. Because of

---

[111] Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, carton 4, folio 12, March 21, 1853. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 143.
[112] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 67.
[113] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 17-18.
[114] Menshikov was clearly taking his cues from the tsar through Nesselrode. See, Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., pp. 306-7.
[115] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 50.

motivated biases, both Britain and Russia made a crucial mistake regarding the presumed Turkish response. As noted earlier, when cognitive biases predominate, we tend to extrapolate the recent behavior of one actor to another. This is usually an invalid manner of proceeding, but, if employed in more long-term fashion over a variety of important issues, it is not always wrong and can be an economical manner in which to rationally read the environment. It is true that Turkey was weak and Russia was strong. But, to fail to reckon that the amour-propre of Turkey could not be insulted as would the sentiment of a major European power in similar circumstances was to fail to recognize that Turkey believed that it had options, notably in a combination with France and Britain against Russia.[116]

Nesselrode and Orlov acutely recognized this problem and they pleaded with Nicholas to replace Menshikov with the latter and to simply concentrate on demands for a restoration of the status quo and to drop any demands for the future.[117] Nevertheless, Nicholas felt that his actions were quite conservative given that he was sure that Britain and Austria would side with him, that France was isolated, and that Menshikov made a secret offer to the Turks to protect them against any possible retribution by the French.[118] Nicholas assured Orlov

---

[116] Clarendon recognized that the Sultan would be reduced from an independent ruler to a vassal, but did not envison the latter's response. See, Reid, Lord John Russell, op. cit., p. 223; Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., pp. 81-82.
[117] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 51.
[118] Zaionchkovskii, Prilozheniia, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 370. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 86.

that Menshikov's demands could be modified as suggested if the Turks refused or if the reaction of the western powers was too strong.[119] That Nicholas resisted sound advice given by two respected and trusted diplomats in his own government is further evidence that he suffered from motivated bias. The tsar believed that he was framing the situation conservatively, that the insurance premium was being employed in conservative fashion in order to retrieve what had opportunistically been taken from him by the French regarding his presumed predominance over the Ottoman Empire. While Nicholas was being risk acceptant for loss, he seems to have believed that his demand for future compliance by the Turks, while perhaps a bit risk acceptant for gain, was quite justified given the harm done to his prestige and could nevertheless be rescinded were he to encounter resistance. War with the Turks was a possibility, but Nicholas believed that the British would restrain the French from fighting by refusing them assistance.[120] Given the tsar's somewhat nuanced appreciation of the situation, it seems reasonable to classify Menshikov's demands as an instance of defensive avoidance although somewhat weaker than the theory implies.[121]

Though there was immense hesitation about doing so, Aberdeen dispatched Stratford to Constantinople in order to respond to Menshikov's demands.[122] Given strict marching orders, Stratford encouraged the Turks to

---

[119] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 51.
[120] Zaionchkovskii, Prilozheniia, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 380-81. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 90.
[121] See discussion of the concept in Chapter 1, pp. 48-54.
[122] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., pp. 144-45.

accede to the Russian demands for a restoration of the status quo. Doing so would put them in a stronger position to resist the demand for a Russian protectorate of all Christians within the Ottoman Empire.[123]

At the same time that Orlov was having an effect on softening Nicholas's demands, the Turks stiffened their backs. During the 1849 extradition crisis of Polish and Hungarian refugees discussed earlier, the Sultan came away believing that British resolve forced the Russians to yield.[124] Thus, remembering this prompted him to believe that British and French assistance might allow Turkey the best opportunity since the reign of Peter the Great to throw off the yoke of Russian domination.[125] Alarmed at Menshikov's additional demands, the French dispatched their fleet to the Salamis. These demands for the future also convinced Rose, the British chargé d'affaires at Constantinople, that Russia was bent on the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. But Clarendon, who had replaced Russell as foreign secretary, denied a request from Rose (in concert with the Sultan), to dispatch the British fleet. Together, Aberdeen and Clarendon successfully opposed calls by Russell and Palmerston to dispatch the fleet in order to engage in 'violent measures'.[126] Aberdeen recognized that sending the British fleet would only encourage the Turks to resist Russia.[127]

---

[123] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 309.
[124] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 33.
[125] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 85; Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 100.
[126] Greville, Reeve, ed., Memoirs, 3rd ed., vol. 7, op. cit., p. 55.
[127] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 70.

The British government had to determine the real motives of the tsar. On the one hand, there were his professions, through Brunnow, the Russian ambassador in London, of continued peaceful intentions regarding the Holy Places dispute. This, Aberdeen focused on. On the other hand, the Menshikov mission was undeniably threatening in nature, which was quite germane to Palmerston's outlook.[128] At this juncture, Aberdeen stated "I am quite ready to admit that [the Menshikov demands] are unreasonable and ought to be resisted. But I cannot yet believe that it will be necessary to do so by war if the Emperor should hitherto have been acting in good faith; if his whole conduct should have been a cheat, the case is altered."[129] Thus, a very interesting exchange between Aberdeen and Palmerston prefigures the extent to which the former was factoring anticipated negative regret into his decision calculus. In 1849, threats to Turkish territorial integrity were predictably and reliably thwarted by the presence of the British fleet at the mouth of the Dardanelles (the European side).[130] For Palmerston, such deterrent action was a standard instrument in the quiver of British foreign policy. But here he went further, arguing that the fleet should be sent up the Bosphorus (the Asian side), thus clearly violating the Straits Agreement. Aberdeen curiously responded that such action was only a half measure that would merely relieve Russia of its responsibility to maintain the peace. Rather, if and when Constantinople needed to be defended, Aberdeen

---

[128] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 83.
[129] Clarendon Papers, op. cit., carton 4, folio 38, May 30, 1853. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 151.
[130] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 99.

argued that the British fleet should immediately be dispatched to the Black Sea.[131] Whereas Palmerston wished to engage in graduated measures of deterrence with Russia, Aberdeen seemed to view deterrence as an all or nothing affair. Palmerston's approach had the advantage of making fine and timely adjustments in signaling to deter the tsar from graduated aggression against the Turks before he took an overextended position due to his amour-propre. In theory, Aberdeen's conciliatory approach offered the benefit of reassuring an otherwise insecure state, much as is argued by cooperation (or the spiral) theory. But, while Aberdeen's remarks do not indicate that he had a motivated bias for peace at any price,[132] he seemed more concerned to avoid involvement in the Eastern Question than to reassure a possibly insecure state. In effect, Aberdeen wanted to give the tsar as much rope as he needed with which to hang himself and then to grudgingly react with military force. Unfortunately, Aberdeen's attitude merely reinforced Nicholas's belief that he could continue to deal with the Sultan with impunity.

Menshikov offered a modification to the tsar's demands, dropping the requirement for a defensive treaty with Turkey and life tenure for the Greek Patriarch in the Holy Land. Nevertheless, the requirement of a sened confirming

---

[131] Clarendon Papers, op. cit., carton 3, folios 48-51, May 30, 1853. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 149.
[132] This was Palmerston's later condemnation of Aberdeen's Eastern policy. See, Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 5, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

a Russian protectorate over Orthodox Christians remained.[133] The Sultan's council communicated its rejection of the offer to Menshikov through Reshid, an intermediary without portfolio, foolishly thought to be in Russia's pocket. Reshid treacherously blamed Stratford's attitude as the reason for the refusal.[134] There would be no change in the status of the Holy Places without the concurrence of both the French and Russian governments.[135]

Russian, British, and French reactions.

Russia broke relations with Turkey; Nesselrode stated that Russia would occupy the Principalities until such time that Turkey complied with Menshikov's demands.[136] Nicholas vented spleen by issuing a manifesto for all his subjects to go forth and "fight for the Orthodox faith against the obstinate and blinded Ottoman Government."[137]

---

[133] Saab, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance, op. cit., p. 39; Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 107.

[134] Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., pp. 323-32. There was enough treachery to go around. Stratford informed the Sultan that, "in case of danger he was instructed to request the commander of H.M.'s forces in the Mediterranean to hold his squadron in readiness" (memorandum dated April 23, 1853 in Stanley Lane-Poole, Life of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green, 1890), p. 269). Stratford did not go beyond his instructions insofar as he was not authorized to call the fleet to the Dardanelles in event of trouble, but this was a distinction without a difference to the Turks. As Seton-Watson notes, "this had a magical effect, and the Russian demands were rejected" (Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 310). Reid argues that the mere dramatic return of Stratford to Constantinople gave the Turks reason to believe that the British had their backs. See, Reid, Lord John Russell, op. cit., p. 224.

[135] Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 133.

[136] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 310.

[137] Hansard, vol. cxxviii, op. cit., p. 1356.

The crisis over the Holy Places had previously been a remote concern for both Aberdeen and the British public.[138] Nevertheless, as the tsar fulminated, Napoleon contemporaneously baited the prime minister. Walewski, the French ambassador in London, warned the Belgians that, with an outbreak of war in the east, the French would no longer consider itself bound by the Vienna Settlement. Thus, if Britain wished to preserve Belgian neutrality, it would have to work more closely with France in Constantinople. This move was prefigured as Drouyn de Lhuys, the French foreign minister, warned Cowley, the British ambassador in Paris, that France had as much right to enter Belgium to keep order as had Austria when it intervened in Switzerland.[139] France was clearly contending the status quo whereas Britain wished to maintain it. But which status quo and where? In order to maintain the status quo in Europe, Britain had to abet France to change it in the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, Britain was increasingly coming to believe that, if it failed to act with France, the latter would steal a march on it both in Europe and in the Levant. Communications were seriously deficient between the two governments and they did not deal with each other in good faith.[140] Each thought that the other would proceed unilaterally if it did not go along, but that, in reality, neither would have moved

---

[138] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 70.
[139] Napoleon escalated a latent conflict over Belgian publications that were hostile to him as well as pro-Bourbon French officers in the Belgian army. See, Puryear, England, Russia, and the Straits Question, 1844-56, op. cit., pp. 242-55; —"New Light on the Origins of the Crimean War," Journal of Modern History, vol. 3, no. 2 (June 1931), p. 232.
[140] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 106.

without the other.[141] France took the early lead in aggressive action, then faltered, and the lead was taken over by Britain. With regard to each other, British and French actions were a pis-aller, a means to ensure that the other did not take action alone: "From start to finish the maritime Powers were drawn along by the need to prove to each other their mutual good faith."[142] Thus, during the pre-war diplomacy, in working at cross-purposes to each other, both Britain and France found themselves in the curious position of engaging in risk acceptant behavior for gain in order to maintain their risk acceptance for loss.

This was not all. French blustering reinforced Nicholas's motivated bias that he had a free hand to deal with the French in the Ottoman Empire and was a significant cause in the aggressive posture that he took there.[143] Although Napoleon overextended himself with his support of the clerics in the Holy Land at precisely the time that he did not need to do so, his threat to violate Belgian neutrality was largely idle.[144] Though the Tories were disinclined to believe this, they did have options that the tsar hadn't fully thought through. Nicholas saw French threats to Belgium as being more vital to Britain than any threatened interests in Turkey. In this Aberdeen agreed with him,[145] but instead of opposing

---

[141] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., pp. 107-8. Logistically, neither side could have proceeded without the other because, for the Crimean campaign, British land forces were numerically deficient while French seapower transport was numerically deficient. See, Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 325.
[142] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 59.
[143] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 18.
[144] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 144, fn. 1.
[145] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 46.

France in Belgium, he worked with the former in order to restrain it. The price was joint cooperation in the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, Aberdeen gave too much away. Due to Louis Napoleon's insecurity, the French needed an alliance with the British more than the British needed an alliance with the French.[146] As late as October 1853, Aberdeen recognized this, yet he failed to use this inherent leverage to control French pretensions as well as to more vigorously lobby for a policy of joint European action to force Russia to desist in its aggressive diplomacy.[147]

Napoleon's proposal for an entente was adopted by the British cabinet at the end of May 1853. This action was largely in response to Russell's argument to Aberdeen that the government would fall unless decisive action was taken.[148] Russell was not a disinterested advisor; he was looking to replace Aberdeen as prime minister in the near term and traded on rising Russophobia to ingratiate himself with the public. Russell and Palmerston were Whigs, although Russell was a true liberal whereas Palmerston was decidedly more muted.[149] Both were hawkish toward Russia, but Russell was also devoted to enlarging the voting franchise in Britain and did not see the practical contradiction between both

---

[146] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 268.
[147] Writing to the Queen, the prime minister argued for a policy of neutrality regarding the Holy Places dispute and he believed that France would follow suit as "the English alliance is more valuable to [Napoleon] personally, over all other considerations" (Aberdeen letter to the Queen, October 6, 1853, in Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 275-76).
[148] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 78.
[149] To be fair, Palmerston was not domestically illiberal; he just thought that expanding the franchise when the party system was in its infancy would be disastrous for Britain. See, Snyder, Myths of Empire, op. cit., pp. 206-8.

stances. Palmerston was determined to quash legislation that would ultimately become the Second Reform Act of 1867. Thus, although Palmerston did not state outright, he rightly saw that beating the war drum against Russia effectively killed voting reform domestically.[150] There was significant daylight between the political views of Russell and Palmerston, to say nothing of the personal enmity between them. Graham, first Lord of the Admiralty, wisely observed to Gladstone that public opinion becomes the arbiter when the cabinet is too finely balanced.[151] This observation applies a fortiori in the presence of two strong-willed statesmen such as Russell and Palmerston. But Aberdeen, although highly intelligent, was not a political animal.[152] He made no effort to drive a wedge between his cabinet adversaries, perhaps by allying with Russell on the reform issue in exchange for a more conciliatory view of Russia.[153] Together, then, Aberdeen and Russell might have framed the Eastern Question as one of conciliation toward Russia as being both in the interest of British imperialism as well as the promotion of liberalism abroad. This was not unthinkable as Aberdeen successfully framed British-American relations regarding North

---

[150] Aberdeen observed of Palmerston, "he had stolen a march by combining the Eastern Question with Reform. Truly, he is a great artist" (Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., p. 393).
[151] John Morley, The Life of William Ewart Gladstone, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 1428.
[152] Chamberlain, Lord Aberdeen, op. cit., p. 531.
[153] Domestic reform was Russell's lifework; he was rather indifferent towards British foreign policy. See, Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 58. Moreover, Aberdeen was prepared to go as far on the Reform issue as was Russell. See, Gooch, ed., The Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 150-51.

America in such manner. Palmerston, then, would have been isolated and not able to occupy the bully pulpit.

Palmerston did not believe that a major power war would be necessary in order to defend the Ottoman Empire. As noted earlier, he thought that the presence of the British fleet at the Straits would be a sufficient deterrent to Russian aggression: "My opinion is that if England & France stoutly support Turkey in this matter by negotiation, backing up their negotiation by adequate naval demonstration, they will ultimately succeed even if Austria and Prussia give them no assistance."[154] But Palmerston felt that a long delay in intervening would make "[Britain] the laughingstock of Europe,"[155] despite Aberdeen's observation that Britain was not bound by any treaty to come to the aid of Turkey.[156] Unfortunately, it did not largely matter that he was currently the home secretary, because, since the resolution of the 1841 Straits crisis, Palmerston was widely recognized as the British foreign policy expert.[157] But he developed a very strange motivated bias regarding the viability of the Ottoman Empire that was clearly connected to his increasing opposition to Russia. Making a patently false argument, Palmerston argued that liberal revolutionaries in the Balkans were not seen as being fit to govern, but the reactionary Sultan was apparently

---

[154] Gooch, ed., The Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 150-51; Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 83.
[155] Graham Papers, Cambridge University Library, May 31, 1853. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 152.
[156] Clarendon Papers, op. cit., carton 4, folios 42-43, June 7, 1853. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 153.
[157] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 62.

making great strides toward modernizing and liberalizing Turkey.[158] Russia was clearly self-interested, conservative and reactionary, and did not support liberal reform movements per se. But the Balkan people recognized that their only hope for independence lay with Russia and not with the Porte. The limited autonomy that they presently enjoyed was due to exertions on the part of the tsar.[159] Thus, as Seton-Watson notes, "it was a fatality that [the Russian] autocracy should have stood for progress and civilization in the Balkans, and that its evil reputation should have betrayed the West into supporting a still more odious and decadent tyranny in Turkey."[160]

Grudgingly, Clarendon and Aberdeen came over to Palmerston's view without realizing the extent to which such a position would be negatively perceived by Nicholas. Clarendon confided to Walewski that he wished that Britain had called up the fleet earlier as he believed that hostilities against Turkey were imminent.[161] To Aberdeen, Clarendon argued that the fleet should be called to the Aegean, blithely believing that Russia would have no right to take offense "after the patience with which we have endured her enormous and unexplained armaments. [This would be] the least measure that would satisfy public opinion, and save the Government from shame thereafter."[162] Temperley

---

[158] Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 5, op. cit., p. 37; Hansard, vol. cxxviii, op. cit., pp. 1808-10.
[159] Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 116.
[160] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 303.
[161] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 150.
[162] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 126-27.

argues that hostile public opinion forced Clarendon's preference reversal.[163] But Clarendon argued that Russian action forced this change of heart.[164] These two opinions can be reconciled because the imminence of a significant event, irrespective of its certainty, can contribute to preference reversal due to affect.[165] Thus, Gillard argues that, "consideration for public opinion, such as Clarendon expressed, could conveniently sanctify the change of mind which politicians always find so embarrassing."[166] Clarendon's preference reversal was due to affect; adverse public opinion was the rationalization for a change of policy taken for another reason.

Aberdeen thus relented to the demands of Russell, Palmerston, and Clarendon despite his better judgment. The fleet was dispatched eastwards although Clarendon was instructed to communicate the benign motive and spirit with which the decision was made in hopes that it would not destroy "Britain's salutary influence"[167] with Russia. Aberdeen confided to Clarendon in an oft-stated phrase, "we are drifting fast towards war."[168]

Both Nicholas and Aberdeen deluded themselves into believing that the other should take no offense to their respective actions. Brunnow continued to

---

[163] Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., p. 336.
[164] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., p. 128.
[165] Alexander George's comments in Farnham, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis: Insights from Prospect Theory," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., p. 66.
[166] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 87.
[167] Clarendon Papers, op. cit., carton 4, folios 40-41, June 1, 1853. Cited in Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 223-24.
[168] Clarendon Papers, op. cit., carton 4, folios 42-43, June 7, 1853. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 153.

tell Aberdeen what the prime minister most wanted to hear: that Russia sought only a rectification of the status quo and nothing more, and that the tsar's amour-propre was not engaged.[169] In June 1853, the British fleet steamed towards Besika Bay with the French fleet arriving the day after. Russian troops crossed the Pruth into Moldavia in July of that year. The tsar did so because he did not want to be seen backing down before threats made by the western powers.[170] Moreover, Russia had special treaty rights with regard to the Principalities, and it had occupied them on four previous occasions. Thus, Orlov only retrospectively agreed that the most recent occupation was high-handed.[171]

Nesselrode later wrote a memorandum arguing for the propriety of the occupation. But he also inflamed western sentiments by arguing that the action was taken in response to hostile western naval actions.[172] Reflexively hostile towards Nicholas, Palmerston quickly lost his loosely-guarded restraint upon news of the occupation and loudly argued that "Russia was led on step by step by the apparent timidity of the government of England."[173] The Tory Press and Morning Herald wrote pieces demanding the impeachment of Aberdeen and Clarendon for aiding and abetting Menshikov. But The Times wrote quite a good opinion of Aberdeen's policy. Public opinion was not yet inflamed to the point of

---

[169] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 153.
[170] Antoine H. Jomini, Diplomatic Study of the Crimean War (1852-1856) by a Former Diplomat, vol. 2 (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1882), pp. 194-95.
[171] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 347.
[172] Circular of July 3, 1853, Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, section x, carton 38, Vienna. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 159.
[173] Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 5, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

being causal in affecting British foreign policy.[174] Given the tsar's motivated bias to prevail, Palmerston was quite wrong in his diagnosis, but he did put his finger on the problem regarding the prime minister's strategy. Aberdeen pursued a straddle strategy when the situation clearly did not call for it. As elaborated by Glenn Snyder, the composite security dilemma operates when walking a fine line between being entrapped by a forward ally and being abandoned by that ally and consequently being left alone to face an aggressive adversary. Always difficult to achieve, the key to successfully employing the straddle strategy is to restrain the ally at the same rate that the adversary is deterred from aggression.[175] The problem here, as the Belgian king and others noted, is that a way must be found for the tsar to retreat from his overexposed position "avec honneur."[176] Moreover, Napoleon was forward but, as will be shown, was looking for a way to tamp down the dispute over the Holy Places. Thus, the push-pull dynamics requiring a mixed, straddle strategy simply were not present in this instance. Why then, was Aberdeen engaging in actions that had no

---

[174] Although British public opinion was inflamed at news of the Russian occupation of the Principalities, it was still inchoate and vacillating. See, Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 81. Aberdeen was determined to keep his coalition government from falling and letting Palmerston take over as prime minister. Thus, he later bowed to hostile, public opinion, and press, respectively, and authorized the declaration of war against Russia at the end of March 1854. Of course, Aberdeen's government did fall and Palmerston did replace him. Nevertheless, British opinion was turning against Turkey in favor of Russia as late as November 1853, when it reversed course again as the consequence of the Russian sinking of the Turkish fleet at Sinope. See, Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 207, 236.

[175] Glenn H. Snyder, Alliance Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 332-35.

[176] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 145-46.

consistency of purpose?[177] His comment that "we are drifting fast towards war without raising a hand to prevent it" was prescient, but he was in the best position to stop it and did not take appropriate action.

As evidence, in a curious report to the Queen, Aberdeen summarized a June 11 1853 cabinet meeting in which all agreed that Britain was not obliged by any treaty to come to the aid of Turkey and that a peaceful solution was desired. But then the prime minister seemed resigned to his belief that Stratford would encourage the Turks to resist the tsar's demands, whereupon the Russians would proceed to occupy the Principalities. He stated that preventive measures had been taken,[178] but they were too little too late and served only to embolden the Turks and anger the Russians. A number of questions are relevant. First, why was Stratford not relieved of his post when the documentary evidence indicates that Aberdeen, Graham, and the Queen no longer had confidence in him?[179] Even if Stratford was conducting his country's foreign policy in good faith, the very fact that Aberdeen believed this not to be the case, undermined the latter's ability to control the situation. Second, why were instructions delayed to Turkey not to make the occupation of the Principalities a casus belli? Third, if the second point was British foreign policy, why was Stratford (or a replacement diplomat) not

---

[177] This is Schroeder's primary complaint of Aberdeen. See, Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 410-11.
[178] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., p. 144.
[179] Stanmore, Life of Aberdeen (London, 1893), p. 271; Herbert Maxwell, The Life and Letters of George William Frederick, Fourth Earl of Clarendon, vol. 2 (London: Edward Arnold, 1913), p.12; Arthur C. Benson and Viscount Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 2 (London: John Murray, 1908), p. 460.

expressly refused authority to call up the fleet?[180] Removing Stratford from his post and refusing authority to authorize fleet movements would have sent an unmistakable signal to the Turks that Britain would not be party to any contemplated aggression on their part. By failing to do so, actions spoke louder than words.

Anticipated negative regret was clearly at work here. Aberdeen was worried that there was the possibility that Turkey might be vanquished by Russia were the British fleet not nearby as a deterrent. Failing to order the fleet movement would bring opprobrium through hostile British public opinion, thus causing his government to fall. But, the tsar stated that his troops would remain on the defensive in the Principalities and tolerate Turkish skirmishing across the Danube.[181] Unfortunately, the Sultan believed Aberdeen to be bluffing when the latter communicated through Stratford that Britain would not support Turkish aggression.[182] Thus, Turkish, and not Russian, aggression, respectively, was the primary contingency to guard against.

In addition, France was backing down as Napoleon authorized Austria to draw up the Vienna Note that essentially reinstated the status quo regarding the Holy Places. Nicholas immediately accepted the provisions of the Note outright. All that was left was for the Sultan to agree. By August 1853, it appeared that the straddle strategy was working. According to Granville, the anticipated success

---

[180] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 154.
[181] Gorchakov circular, July 4 1853, Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, op. cit., p. 598. Cited in Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 88.
[182] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

would "be principally owing to Aberdeen, who has been staunch and bold in defying public clamour, abuse, and taunts, and in resisting the wishes and advice of Palmerston, who would have adopted a more stringent and uncompromising course."[183] Regarding the Eastern Question, Gladstone seconded Granville by writing to Aberdeen, "whatever be its final issue you are the person to whom we owe its present state. There is clearly no other man in the Cabinet who combined calmness, solidity of judgment, knowledge of the question, and moderation of views, in a manner or degree (even independent of your personal and official authority) sufficient to have held the country."[184]

Gladstone's encomium of Aberdeen was off the mark. The Turks were invited by Buol, the Austrian foreign minister, to write a note of their own, but the four European powers (Britain, France, Austria, and Prussia) drawing up the Vienna Note refused to pass it on and substituted their own based on the French proposal. Angered that they had no part in its writing, the Turks then refused the Vienna Note.[185] Subsequent Turkish modifications to the Vienna Note included a declaration of protection of Orthodox Christians in the Holy Places through the sufferance of the Sultan, and deletion of Russian rights achieved as the

---

[183] Greville, Reeve, ed., Memoirs, 3rd ed., vol. 6, op. cit., p. 438.
[184] Gladstone letter to Aberdeen, August 12 1853. Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 173.
[185] It is possible that Stratford induced them to reject it, but this is a point of endless scholarly controversy. See, Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 76.

consequence of the Treaty of Kutchuk Kainardji, respectively.[186] Nicholas countered by refusing to accede to what he dubbed the 'Turkish ultimatum.'

It was not the intent of the Turkish amendments to the Vienna Note to allow Russia a protectorate over Orthodox Christians in perpetuity, but Nesselrode interpreted it as such. Unfortunately, in September 1853, his confidential written interpretation to the tsar was leaked to the German press and published, with the anti-Russian German opinion that the proposed amendments as understood by the Turks were justified. Clarendon then referred to Nesselrode's interpretation as 'violent' and British public opinion was both outraged and engaged.

Contemporaneously, at the Olmütz Conference (also known as the Buol Project) composed of Russia and Austria, the tsar made serious concessions. Specifically, he pledged that "the Cabinet of St. Petersburg gives a new assurance that it will in no way exercise for itself the protection of a Christian cult inside the Ottoman Empire, and the duty of protecting this cult and maintaining its religious immunity has devolved on the Sultan and that Russia only reserves to itself that of watching that the engagement contracted by the Ottoman Empire in the Treaty of Kainardji be strictly executed."[187] In effect, Nicholas was refuting the 'violent interpretation' given to the Turkish amendments to the Vienna Note by Nesselrode as the private opinion of a diplomat. Moreover, Nicholas was

---

[186] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 86-87.
[187] Cited in Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., pp. 354-56.

dropping his demand for a future protectorate over Orthodox Christians in the Holy Places.

Russell's preference reversal from his belief in the need for Turkish acceptance of the Vienna Note to the conclusion that he drew from Russia's rejection of the Turkish amendments was due to an irrationally consistent belief that Russia intended to subjugate the Ottoman Empire, despite the tsar's disavowal of the 'violent interpretation'. Originally, Russell agreed with the prime minister that the tsar might accept the Turkish modifications to the Vienna Note but that he could not be pressed into doing so. He further argued that both the Turks and the Russians should be urged to maintain the status quo.[188] But then, Russell reversed course writing to Aberdeen, "the question must be decided by war, and if we do not stop the Russians on the Danube, we shall have to stop them on the Indus."[189]

Clarendon followed suit by rejecting the Olmütz proposal and arguing that the 'violent interpretation' still stood. He engaged in irrational consistency as well. The foreign secretary was determined to reject the Olmütz proposal even before he saw evidence of the 'violent interpretation'. He did so by believing there was a catch somewhere when Nicholas accepted the Vienna Note.[190] Moreover, as further evidence of his confused state of thinking, Clarendon

---

[188] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., p. 230. A similar letter was written by Russell to Clarendon. See, Spencer Walpole, The Life of Lord John Russell, vol. 2 (New York: Greenwood Press, [1889] 1968), p. 188.
[189] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., p. 230.
[190] Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War, op. cit., p. 59; Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 86.

opined to Seymour that, at Olmütz, the tsar "did eat dirt and went far to neutralize the dispatch of objections to the modifications." Seymour agreed, stating that "the Buol project was a clear example of [Nicholas trying to back down]."[191] Moreover, Clarendon's later peace proposals were scarcely different from the Olmütz proposal that he dismissed out of hand only a few weeks earlier.[192] One explanation for this vacillating behavior is that Clarendon had no political following; he commanded no popularity in the House of Commons, where he had never sat, nor throughout the country.[193] Thus, he was unusually susceptible to the friendly but constant pressure of Palmerston's importuning to take an aggressive stance towards Russia.[194] But this sequence of behavior is also consistent with the prospect theory phenomenon that decision-makers are frequently unaware that they are framing situations differently despite the fact that the status quo has not materially changed.[195]

In September 1853, the war party in Turkey had taken control of events and was spoiling for a war with Russia. Riots and demonstrations endangered the lives and property of British nationals in Turkey. Without cabinet concurrence, Aberdeen authorized Stratford to call up the fleet in order to protect British interests that the Turkish government seemed unable to protect. The

---

[191] Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 78-79.
[192] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 265.
[193] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 63.
[194] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 161.
[195] Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice," Science, new series, vol. 211, no. 4481 (January 30, 1981), pp. 453-58; Kahneman and Tversky, "Choices, values, and frames," American Psychologist, vol. 39, no. 4 (April 1984), pp. 341-50.

prime minister was following a French suggestion for concerted action. Thus, Aberdeen found an excuse to call the fleet to Constantinople and still cling to his motivated bias that Britain was merely engaging in defensive action to which the tsar had no reason to object.[196] This action merely emboldened the Turks and they formally declared war on Russia in October.

As noted, the tsar continued to tolerate Turkish skirmishing across the Danube. Moreover, he was equally restrained in the Balkans in deference to Austrian insecurity. But Nicholas could not abide Turkish military actions that encouraged resistance to Russian rule in the Caucasus. At the end of November, with great difficulty, the Russians inflicted a heavy defeat on the Turkish army attacking Georgia. At the same time, Turkey made a crucial tactical blunder by mooring its fleet in the open at Sinope, while enroute to resupplying troops in the Caucasus. Upon demand, the Turks foolishly failed to raise the white flag. Thus, the fleet was easily destroyed and four thousand Turks perished at the hand of the Russian navy. British public opinion then reached a fevered Russophobic pitch.

Preference reversals by Aberdeen, and then, Nicholas, respectively.

Although Russia was acting within its legal rights at Sinope,[197] Palmerston seized the moment by holding forth on Nicholas's seemingly increasingly aggressive behavior and taking aim at the pacifists, notably Bright and Cobden. Earlier,

---

[196] Temperley, "Stratford de Redcliffe and the Origins of the Crimean War," English Historical Review, vol. 48, no. 192 (October 1934), pp. 276-77.
[197] Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 102.

Palmerston declared: "I am desirous that England should be well with Russia as long as the Emperor allows us to be so, but if he is determined to break a lance with us, why, then have at him, say I, and perhaps he may have enough of it before we have done with him."[198] He later lampooned Bright in public by arguing that the latter would have "…[Britain] submit to any degradation rather than have recourse to war."[199] Now, with Palmerston leading the charge, public opinion excoriated Aberdeen for not stationing the British fleet in the Black Sea in order to protect the Turks and to prevent the massacre at Sinope, as it was now dubbed. Never mind that the Russians had previously sunk the Turkish fleet at Navarino in 1827, and that the British 'Copenhagened' the Danish fleet in 1807, two events to which hostile British public opinion was decidedly mute. In this instance, the tsar had indeed taken precipitant action. Nevertheless, he was resolved to restore the status quo in the Holy Land through his public declarations at Olmütz at the same time that Aberdeen reversed his preference for action-oriented behavior in which the insurance premium was now to be used in risky fashion as a lottery ticket. As discussed below, this preference reversal occurred despite the fact that the status quo had not materially changed.

The Russia of 18th century Catherine II had indeed been predatory. But the 19th century version had shown great moderation. On two separate occasions, during the 1828-29 Russo-Turkish war, and during the 1839-41 Straits crisis,

---

[198] Letter to Sidney Herbert, September 21 1853, cited in Evelyn Ashley, Life and Correspondence of Henry John Temple, viscount Palmerston, vol. 1 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1879), pp. 37-40.
[199] Hansard, vol. cxxxi, op. cit., pp. 676-81.

respectively, Turkey was on the verge of collapse. But Russia was not opportunistic and did not try to profit at its expense. In the present instance, Brunnow wrote a cost-benefit analysis for Nicholas that indicated that war would not be advantageous for Russia. The ambassador believed that war would destroy the Ottoman Empire; thus the Treaty of Kutchuk Kainardji would be null and void. Consequently, small states, such as Greece and the Principalities, would break away and become troublesome neighbors, or remain as ungrateful vassals. France, Britain, and Greece would profit at Russia's expense.[200] Thus, as before, there was little reason to believe that Russia had any interest in precipitating a general war.

Aberdeen had earlier made his own cost-benefit analysis regarding the Holy Places dispute. In the prime minister's estimation, the tsar was a reasonable man, notwithstanding his public outbursts. In contrast, Napoleon was playing with fire with his adventurism in the Ottoman Empire. Europe might be embroiled in a major power war for years to come with implications for the solidity of Continental relations. It was madness to believe that Muslims and Christians could cohabitate with each other in the Levant. Aberdeen reviled the Menshikov mission, but Turkey had largely brought it upon itself by its disunion and treachery. Russia was redressing a grievance and would control itself and

[200] Martens, Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie avec les puissances étrangères, vol. 12 (St. Petersburg, 1874-1906), p. 325. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 159.

continue to cooperate with Britain in the Ottoman Empire after receiving satisfaction.[201]

Thus, despite appearances to the contrary, the larger status quo had not changed significantly in the estimation of both Nicholas and Aberdeen, notwithstanding the unfortunate incident at Sinope.[202] As noted, Turkey had gone to war with Russia in 1829 and lost, just as it later would in 1877. In both wars, the major European powers put diplomatic limits on the military victories after the fact, just as they would have constrained Russia in this instance.[203] Given Nicholas's framing of the situation as continuing to be risk acceptant for loss, but refraining to take risks in order to make gains, coupled with the fact that the status quo had not materially changed, a great power war should not have erupted. Public opinion in Britain was hostile, but it merely served to rationalize the preferences of those predisposed to taking an aggressive stance toward Russia. Moreover, public opinion in France was decidedly muted and was not warlike.[204] Since neither Britain nor France would have acted without the other (despite each's disbelief regarding the other's intentions), public opinion could not be a galvanizing force because it was not coincident in both states.

A more proximate reason for the war is to be found in the mutual suspicions that Britain and France harbored toward each other. These suspicions

---

[201] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 67.
[202] Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 167.
[203] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 265.
[204] Clarendon wrote to Graham, "the unpopularity of the war in France is alarming to me" (Graham Papers, op. cit., January 30, 1854). Cited in Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 248, fn. 2.

eventually foreclosed policy options that might have brought this crisis to a relatively peaceful conclusion. It has been argued that Britain was formerly faced with the problem of deterring Russia from opportunistically gaining privileges in the Holy Land with a protectorate of Orthodox Christians in perpetuity. Now, with the disaster at Sinope, it is further argued that the new problem was to prevent the destruction of the Ottoman Empire and a consequent cataclysmic repercussion throughout Europe due to a scramble for its remnants.[205] Thus, two options to prevent this latter hypothetical suggested themselves. The first option was to steadfastly align with the other European powers to force Russia to quit the Principalities and to restore the status quo in the Levant.[206] This would have required an undiluted Aberdeen policy in which Britain would expressly deny Turkey military support by refusing to call the British fleet in support. Here, the insurance premium would be used in conservative fashion and the endowment principle would hold for all parties. Moreover, this policy provided the only certainty that major power war would not break out.[207]

The second option was to give Turkey financial and military backing in order to defeat the Russians. Here, the insurance premium would be used in a risky fashion with regard to Russia, but the insurance premium might be used in

---

[205] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., p. 87.
[206] Bernadotte E. Schmitt, "The Diplomatic Preliminaries of the Crimean War," American Historical Review, vol. 25, no. 1 (October, 1919), p. 51; Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War, op. cit., p. 408.
[207] Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 264.

a conservative fashion with regard to the Franco-British relationship.[208] Since Aberdeen's cabinet did not trust Napoleon (and Austria signaled that it would stay neutral, much to both Russia's and Britain's chagrin), the action-oriented option in which Britain still believed that it could control the situation was to defend Turkey backed with British and French military force.[209] In this adventure, the two western powers could keep an eye on each other in order to ensure that neither stole a march on the other. Thus, a mixed lottery situation would result for both Britain and France. Foregoing relative gains by marching in lockstep with another forward power might be seen as an instance of being risk acceptant for loss. In effect, Britain and France courted the possibility of war with Russia in order to avoid going to war with each other.[210] But this elevates the secondary to the essential. Moreover, this option only makes sense were Turkey to have been in danger of being dismantled by Russia, an action that the tsar expressly denied any interest in. As evidence, Nicholas was largely begging the rest of Europe to adopt the first option. Given his bona fides, all of the major powers would have enjoyed a greater certainty of outcome (peace without the attendant uncertainties that come with major power conflict), the retainment of all endowments, and a conservative use of the insurance premium.

---

[208] While the endowment principle would be sacrificed, the certainty principle would be preserved, as great power war would result given the incompetence of the Turkish military.
[209] Gillard, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914, op. cit., pp. 87-91.
[210] Britain continued to strengthen its coastal defenses against a feared French invasion at the same time that it cooperated with France in the Ottoman Empire. See, Conacher, The Aberdeen Coalition , op. cit., p. 267.

Although Aberdeen recommended that the Olmütz proposal deserved consideration, that was the extent of his pursuance. Instead, by mid-December, after Palmerston's resignation (ostensibly over Russell's raising the Reform issue), Aberdeen wrote to the Queen that, "some rather strong measures were adopted in consequence of the catastrophe at Sinope, by directing the presence of the English and French fleets in the Black Sea; but no violent or very hostile decision was taken."[211] Although Palmerston returned to the cabinet shortly thereafter, it is important to note that Aberdeen took the decidedly hostile and aggressive action against Russia on his own. To be more precise, Aberdeen took the hostile action in order to draw both Palmerston and Russell back into the fold (the latter was threatening to resign as well). Thus, the prime minister took a warlike stance in order to keep his government from falling.[212] Here is another example of a mixed lottery; Aberdeen was determined to recoup his losses regarding a domestically deteriorating situation even as he recognized the unattractive alternative of the possibility of fighting a war that he did not believe was worth the candle.[213] The French proposal to intercept Russian ships on the Black Sea and to force them to return to port was adopted by the British cabinet

---

[211] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., p. 409.
[212] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 95.
[213] For further empirical evidence on this dynamic, see, Rose McDermott, "Prospect Theory in International Relations: The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, op. cit., pp. 73-100.

with little thought to how such action might be perceived in St. Petersburg.[214] Aberdeen wrote to the Queen: "it was stated categorically that the Emperor of the French would either act alone or that he would withdraw his fleet to Toulon. Public opinion in the country would not permit the dissolution of the Alliance at so critical a juncture by the assertion of a little independence."[215] Palmerston's hostile motivated bias towards Russia kept him from realizing that war was imminent as the consequence of these naval actions. Both the French and British governments continued to believe that presence of western warships on the Black Sea merely raised the diplomatic stakes and that the tsar would back down before superior military power. But Aberdeen was whistling past the graveyard; he and the other dovish members of his cabinet, including Graham and Wood, hoped to avoid war even as they were more or less resigned to it because of the foreign policy option that they saddled themselves with.[216]

Western fleet actions in the Black Sea were not even-handed. When queried by Brunnow, Aberdeen had to admit that the two navies were not there to interpose themselves between two belligerents, but rather, to protect Turkish

---

[214] Aberdeen technically argued to Brunnow that, with Turkey at war, the Black Sea was legally open to all warships. See, Zaionchkovskii, Prilozheniia, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 68-71. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 202.
[215] Aberdeen letter to the Queen, December 22 1853, Royal Archives, Windsor, G9. Cited in Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 95.
[216] Brunnow perceptively argued to Aberdeen that England should face the facts: if it did not want war, it should not provoke it by ostensibly peaceful measures. Moreover, he observed that the prime minister was being used by the Whigs, notably Russell, who was looking to replace him. See, Zaionchkovskii, Prilozheniia, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 68-71. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 202.

forces and to turn a blind eye to their aggression.[217] Contemporaneously, both France and Britain issued an ultimatum to Russia to vacate the Principalities within two months with no mention of peace terms. The Aberdeen government then took the unusual step in publishing the Seymour conversations conducted in 1844. Coupled with Nesselrode's 'violent interpretation' of the Turkish amendments to the Vienna Note, British public opinion was further inflamed.[218]

Head of state diplomacy ensued as Nicholas, in a letter, unsuccessfully implored Queen Victoria to disavow her ministers.[219] Napoleon wrote a misguided note to Nicholas that ended up infuriating the tsar. He argued that the massacre at Sinope had been an outrage and a military affront to both France and Britain. It was also gratuitous. Now, France and Britain wanted a firm understanding. If not, "then France, as well as England, will be compelled to leave to the fate of arms and the fortunes of war that which might now be decided by reason and justice."[220] Nicholas tartly responded: "Russia will be [with France] the same in 1854 as it was in 1812."[221] Finally, Nicholas reminded

---

[217] Martens, "Russiia i Angliia nakanune razryva (1853-1854 gg.)," Vestnik Evropy (April 1898), p. 603. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 231.
[218] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 326.
[219] Martens, "Russiia i Angliia nakanune razryva (1853-1854 gg.)," op. cit., pp. 595-96. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 209.
[220] Kinglake argues that Napoleon was trying to make the letter moderate enough to retain Aberdeen's support yet give their entente a warlike direction. See, Kinglake, The Invasion of the Crimea, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 361-62. Schmitt argues that the letter was intended to force the tsar to declare war. See, Schmitt, "The Diplomatic Preliminaries of the Crimean War," op. cit., p. 51.
[221] Zaionchkovskii, Prilozheniia, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 189-91. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 234.

Franz Joseph of their agreement at Münchengrätz to cooperate against Turkey, pitting Christianity against Islam.[222] But Austria was the most vulnerable major power on the Continent and an Austro-Russian alignment would have been disastrous for it. The Balkans would become rife with revolutionary sentiment. Field reports were pouring in of revolts brewing in Bulgaria, Serbia, Thessaly, and Epirus, fomented, both tacitly and overtly, by Russia. The Swiss and the Poles would revolt, but against the Russians.[223] Buol advised the Emperor that French agitation in Italy would result were an Austro-Russian alliance to be formed.[224] Thus, Franz Joseph turned down Nicholas.[225]

Upon consideration of all this, Nicholas recalled his ambassadors from Paris and London in February 1854 and then handed the western ambassadors their passports.[226] Nicholas did not declare war at this point. At first blush, he appeared to employ the insurance premium in conservative fashion by tolerating western naval actions. Turkish skirmishing in the Principalities was more an annoyance than dangerous to the Russians.[227] But, Palmerston was quite wrong in believing that the tsar could tolerate the hostile western actions on the Black

---

[222] Hanns Schlitter, Aus der Regierungszeit Kaiser Franz Joseph I. (Wien: Druck und Verlag von Adolf Holzhausen, 1919), p. 99. Cited in Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War, op. cit., pp. 42-43, 394.
[223] Joseph Redlich, Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria: A Biography (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, [1929] 1965), pp. 131-34.
[224] Wetzel, The Crimean War, op. cit., p. 96.
[225] Nicholas approached Frederick William IV, the King of Prussia, for an alliance, but was similarly turned down.
[226] Martens, Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie avec les puissances étrangères, vol. 12, op. cit., p. 338. Cited in Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 231.
[227] Curtiss, Russia's Crimean War, op. cit., p. 203.

Sea in his rear at the same time that he was fighting the Turkish army in Asia.[228] Rather, Nicholas had finally reversed preference to use the insurance premium in risky fashion by ordering military preparations in anticipation of war against the western powers. He had to proceed carefully. Expected support from Austria did not materialize. Moreover, Russia did not have the finances to prosecute a long war against the western powers, in large part because it relied on British and French loans to pay for its military.[229]

Britain and France obliged Nicholas by formally declaring war against Russia in March of that year. Aberdeen had lost control of his cabinet and Palmerston had hijacked British foreign policy. On or near the British declaration of war, Palmerston wrote to Russell of his 'beau ideal' concerning the peace terms to be pressed upon Russia: "Åland and Finland restored to Sweden. Some of the German provinces of Russia on the Baltic ceded to Prussia. A substantive Kingdom of Poland reestablished as a barrier between Germany and Russia. Moldavia and Wallachia and the mouths of the Danube given to Austria. Lombardy and Venetia set free from Austrian rule and either made independent states or connected with the Sultan as suzerain."[230] Aberdeen bemoaned that "we have the plan sketched out for a thirty years' war."[231]

---

[228] Temperley, England and the Near East: The Crimea, op. cit., p. 382.
[229] Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 104.
[230] Philip Guedalla, Palmerston, 1784-1865 (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1927), pp. 360-61; Donald Southgate, The Most English Minister: The Policies and Politics of Palmerston (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966), p. 346.
[231] Spencer Walpole, The Life of Lord John Russell, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 214.

Results of the Crimean War.

The intent of this chapter is to analyze the diplomacy leading to the outbreak of the war. But, a number of details regarding the war will aid in assessing the plausibility of mutual affective abandonment as being a primary factor. It did not matter that, in June 1854, Nicholas volitionally ordered his troops to vacate the Principalities and allowed Austria to occupy them as a neutral arbiter for the duration of the war. Thus, there was no reason left for the western powers to prosecute a war against Russia other than to teach it a lesson, which it did. Since the Balkans were now lost as a theater to the western powers, Sebastapol, on the Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea, became the military object of desire, what Graham famously referred to as the "eyetooth of the Bear."[232] There, the British navy performed poorly while the French army acquitted itself quite well.[233] Aberdeen's government fell at the end of January 1855 due to the unexpected resistance of the Russians at Sebastapol, publicized disease ravaging the troops in the Crimea, as well as the incompetence of British military leaders operating in that theater of war.[234] Although Palmerston came to power as prime minister, he did little better. Napoleon sued for peace and Palmerston could only convince him to carry on the conflict were they able to realize his 'beau ideal'. Both sides quickly realized that this was infeasible.[235] In short, both sides quickly lost their

---

[232] Charles Stuart Parker, Life and Letters of Sir James Graham, second baronet, of Netherby, P.C., G.C.B., 1792-1861, vol. 2 (London: 1907), p. 242.
[233] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., pp. 112-13.
[234] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., pp. 109-13.
[235] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 112.

risk acceptance for gain. Palmerston assured Gladstone that "he was not so destitute of common sense, so as not to be able to compare ends and means."[236] Clarendon was closer to the mark when he argued that "a continuation of war would hardly have been possible either with or without France."[237] Because of their mutual suspicions, France and Britain had gone to war together and now they had to quit the war together. Thus, Clarendon continued, "if we had continued the war single-handed, France would feel that she had behaved shabbily to us, and would therefore have hated us all the more, and become our enemy sooner than under any other circumstances."[238]

The Treaty of Paris codified the cessation of hostilities as well as the peace terms. Thereafter, Palmerston publicly stated that, while the results, "if not spectacular, [were] at least satisfactory for the present."[239] He further opined that, "we went to war not so much to keep the Sultan and his Mussulmans in Turkey as to keep the Russians out of Turkey."[240] But Bourne argues that the new prime minister believed that the war was a mistake after the Turks and Russians came to blows, although the latter continued to believe that earlier deterrent measures

---

[236] George D. Campbell, Eighth Duke of Argyll, Autobiography and Memoirs, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1906), pp. 591-92.
[237] Ashley, Life and Correspondence of Henry John Temple, viscount Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 45-49.
[238] Ashley, Life and Correspondence of Henry John Temple, viscount Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 45-49.
[239] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 114.
[240] Palmerston letter to Clarendon, September 25, 1855. Cited in Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 138.

against the tsar would have been successful.[241] In contrast, Aberdeen later lamented that the war might have been prevented had he fought harder against Russell and Palmerston and not allowed good offers, such as the Vienna Note, or the Olmütz proposal, to pass by.[242] Nicholas died before the end of the war and his son, Alexander II, succeeded him as ruler. Orlov later admitted that a number of mistakes were made by Russia. The Menshikov mission, the occupation of the Principalities, the disaster at Sinope, and the refusal of the Turkish amendments to the Vienna Note, were mistakes cited.[243] Alexander's eagerness for peace, coupled with Orlov's comments, indicate that it was Nicholas's motivated bias to salve his wounded amour-propre, rather than anything peculiarly Russian, or geopolitical, that was a significant cause of the war.

The war was not cheap, either in blood or treasure. Russia lost 100,000-200,000 troops; France, 100,000; Britain, 23,000; and Turkey, 30,0000, respectively. The war cost Britain £76 million. A punitive peace treaty was forced on Russia, which Gladstone presciently considered an unwise humiliation.[244] Russia lost possession of the Principalities, but Austria, much to its anger, did not gain them. Russia lost any overarching claims to Christianity in the Ottoman Empire, which was now protected by all of the major European powers. Bessarabia went to

---

[241] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 77.
[242] Schroeder, Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War, op. cit., p. 411, fn; Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., p. 62.
[243] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, op. cit., p. 347.
[244] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 114.

Moldavia and the Russian navy was forbidden to operate on the Black Sea. Finally, Turkey was admitted to the European Concert.[245]

Conclusion: the dynamics of mutual conciliatory affective abandonment.

New information based on the value of the outcome of dissolution of the Ottoman Empire or of a major power war over the Eastern Question, or on the probability of either of those two outcomes, or on the risks of intervention, would suggest that preference reversals could be best explained by a rational choice perspective. But, the rational choice perspective primarily fails here because the status quo did not materially change when preference reversals were made in Britain and Russia, thus leading to the outbreak of the Crimean War. Were the Sinope incident to have been a prelude to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, it is not unreasonable to argue that the outcome of war would indeed have required the other major European powers to defend Turkey against Russia. Aberdeen was in favor of continuance of the Ottoman Empire; he just thought that its preservation was best assured by a policy of peace than of war.[246] In this, Palmerston agreed with him, but he believed that deterrence short of war would achieve this outcome and if deterrence failed, then war would be preferable to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.[247] In contrast, Aberdeen did not believe that maintenance of the Ottoman Empire was worth a general war. These differences of opinion would only matter from a rational choice

---

[245] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., pp. 79-80.
[246] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 235-38.
[247] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 228-30.

perspective were the probability of dissolution significantly raised after the Sinope incident. As was demonstrated, given the tsar's attempts to extricate himself from his overextended position after Sinope, an increase in the probability of dissolution simply was not there. The risks to intervention did increase the probability of major power war; at times Aberdeen worried that breaking the Straits Convention would put Britain and France legally in the wrong with regard to Russia.[248] Retrospectively, Palmerston believed that Britain had crossed the Rubicon when the fleets were dispatched.[249] But this was certainly not Aberdeen's thinking as he continued to deceive himself that the tsar should have no reason to object to the fleet being called to Constantinople in defense of British subjects due to Turkish disturbances. Palmerston's opinion correctly marks Aberdeen's preference reversal. Again, it is not surprising that the prime minister was largely unaware that he had made such a change. Previously, Aberdeen saw no profit in intervening in the Holy Places dispute. But he ultimately allowed his cabinet subordinates to convince him that Britain needed to take action against Russia even though the fleet movement authorization was taken ostensibly in response to Turkish disturbances. At times, Aberdeen recognized that such action was putting Europe on a course towards general war. The Turkish disturbances in Constantinople now allowed Aberdeen to frame the situation as a loss should Britain not intervene in some manner. The loss that he had in mind was the dissolution of his government, not the

[248] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 223-24.
[249] Clayton, Britain and the Eastern Question, op. cit., p. 106.

dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the latter to which he was, at best, indifferent.

The rational choice perspective is further embarrassed by Russia's vacating the Principalities, thus giving the western powers no reason to go to war. Palmerston's 'beau ideal' as an increased value in the worth of a major power war in which the western powers won and Russia was defeated was clearly not rational given the results that were actually achieved. On paper, Russia ended up with a punitive peace, but unless the western powers were to permanently station their fleets on the Black Sea (they did not), the terms could not be enforced (they were not). Both Britain and France could easily see that the price of enforcing the peace in terms of military resources was not sustainable even before hostilities erupted. Both fighting and winning the war or fighting and losing the war made no rational sense. It was a Pyrrhic victory at best.

As detailed above, an explanation of the outbreak of the Crimean War provided by a combination of prospect theory and mutual motivated biases is more persuasive than one provided by rational choice theory. In November 1853, Russell encapsulated the problem when he observed to Aberdeen

> "we are now in an anomalous and painful position and although I shall admit it to no one but yourself, I have arrived at the conviction that it might have been avoided by firmer language, and a more decided course five months ago. Russia would then, as she is now, have been ready to come to terms, and we should have exercised a control over the Turks that is now not to be obtained…You cannot be more adverse to war than I am, but if our pacific determination is too securely reckoned upon, we may render war inevitable."[250]

---

[250] Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55, op. cit., pp. 331-32.

Russell's understanding of the dynamics involved are spot on, but his time frame is off. These dynamics had been building for the past twenty-five years, not just the five months that he makes reference to. Both Russia and Britain, for different reasons outlined in this chapter, developed motivated biases in which they failed to make clear to each other their respective determination to protect their interests in the Ottoman Empire. In this they engaged in mutual conciliatory affective abandonment. Aberdeen was not eager to collect another major power enemy in Russia at a time when Britain had fractious relations with both France and the United States. This strategic situation predisposed the prime minister towards a conciliatory response to Russian diplomatic and military aggressiveness. In turn, Nicholas tried to make his dominance of the Ottoman Empire as inoffensive as possible to Britain and Austria in order to isolate France. One effect of this conciliatory stance was ultimately to inculcate an aggressive notion of opportunism on the parts of France, and later, Britain, respectively, in the Levant. Napoleon had motivated biases to prevail in the Levant, but they were not immutable and he likely would have been dissuaded had Aberdeen used Britain's inherent leverage in any prospective Anglo-French alignment to better effect. Additional incidents, such as the Russian and Austrian demand for Hungarian revolutionaries, the Don Pacifico incident, and the Leiningen mission, were opportunities for all of the major powers to reckon on the true nature of their triadic relations. But, all three major powers failed to object to each other's

aggressive posturing sufficiently during these incidents and sufficiently early during the Holy Places crisis diplomacy when doing so would likely have provided appropriate deterrent effects. Worse, wrong conclusions were drawn by the aggressive parties. Instead of feeling that they had been lucky to have prevailed in a particular instance, thus promoting caution in the future, unpunished aggression merely bolstered in the minds of the relevant statesmen the rectitude of their actions. Thus, having failed to check French opportunism in the Holy Places, Britain allowed Russia the opportunity to be humiliated and an imperious, proud Russian autocrat to take an overextended position due to his wounded amour-propre. Turkey might have been controlled early, but too many humiliations were inflicted with the Menshikov mission in response to French opportunism. In this regard, the tsar engaged in a weak version of defensive avoidance due to his belief held that he had a free hand to deal with Turkey as he saw fit.

Once one gets this far into a crisis, coupled with the motivated biases that had been allowed to germinate over a number of years, it is difficult to argue that Palmerston's aggressive deterrent stance would have prevented war. British and French fleet movements served only to anger the tsar at the same time that they emboldened the Sultan and excited British, and to a lesser degree, French, publics, respectively. This is why deterrent measures tend to exacerbate the situation when the systemic dynamic is characterized by conciliatory affective abandonment. Rather, staunchly refusing assistance to Turkey in order to make

it back down, and if that failed, diplomatically circumscribing any Russian military victory, would surely have prevented a major power war. Even so, war was still not a foregone conclusion because serious concessions made by the tsar through the Olmütz proposal surely would have maintained the relative peace. Thus, this dispute of the moment over the Holy Places would have been remembered as little more than that, rather than a major power war that nobody wanted, but refused to avoid.

Chapter 4: Mutual aggressive affective abandonment: The 1859 War of Italian Unification.

This chapter examines the systemic phenomenon of affective abandonment from an aggressive standpoint in which the major parties to a conflict have motivated biases to precipitate a war. France, with the abetment of Russia, colluded with Sardinia to provoke a war against Austria in to order force the latter out of Italy. Austria, in turn, had motivated biases to fight that war and largely obliged France and Sardinia by attacking first. Of critical importance to this conflict is the imbalanced nature of the European system after the conclusion of the Crimean War. A number of the major powers were isolated, some by choice, others by circumstance. Such isolation allowed France and Sardinia the opportunity to provoke a war of aggression against Austria despite the fact that Austria had all of the treaty rights in its favor. Because the Italian war of 1859 was clearly the result of opportunism on the parts of France, Sardinia, and Austria, the remaining European powers maintained their preferences for risk aversion in counterintuitive fashion. They did this by bidding up their demands for concessions in exchange for assistance to the point that the major combatants preferred to end the conflict and to settle for much less in the way of gains than they had originally contemplated as the incentive for going to war. Thus, aggressors eventually were deterred, not by threats of intervention, but by the failure of intervention sufficiently to break a stalemate on the part of states that

demanded too much compensation for their efforts.[1] That Italy was the clear winner was not foreordained; this was largely the result of the other major powers failing to make the necessary concessions to each other that might have obviated this outcome.

Secret diplomacy and the Franco-Austrian war of 1859 ultimately resulting in the unification of Italy.

The Franco-Austrian War is a limiting example of pure aggression; thus it should be a most likely case study in favor of an expected utility explanation for the war. Conversely, the case study should be a least likely example for a prospect theory explanation; risk aversion should not feature as the controlling dynamic in the resurrection of a unified Italy. Taylor perhaps exaggerates when he argues that the 1859 Italian war is the only example of a major power war being fought for purely aggressive reasons. According to the historian,

> "even aggressive wars have usually an element of prevention. Napoleon I had some grounds for feeling that Alexander I was preparing to attack him when he invaded Russia in 1812; the Germans had some grounds for feeling 'encircled' when they launched both the First and Second World wars in the twentieth century; even Bismarck could plausibly, and perhaps convincingly, claim that he was merely getting his blow in first against both Austria and France. In 1859 neither France, nor even Sardinia, had any ground whatever for fearing an attack from Austria; and they could not have attacked her, unless she had given them the occasion. Both sides mobilized, not from fear, but to force the other side into war."[2]

---

[1] Recall that deterrence can operate even after the outbreak of hostilities. See, Glenn H. Snyder, "Deterrence and Power," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 4, no. 2 (June 1960), p. 168.

[2] A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 111-12.

The motivated biases toward war will be process-traced shortly, but, as noted, the other crucial dynamic is the imbalanced nature of the international system during this period in which the major powers suffered severe alliance handicaps with each other. An alliance handicap is usually construed to mean that a state, for non-systemic reasons, sometimes ideological, sometimes idiosyncratic, refuses to ally with another state in order to cooperate in warding off a threat from a third state. Less imagined is an alliance handicap in which one state refuses to break with a second aggressive state, both at the expense of the interests of a third state, and to the state itself, respectively. Italy could not have been made by its own exertions; it required that Prussia refuse to ally with Austria, and Russia refuse to break with France, even as both Prussia and Russia took a dim view of the fast-spreading revolutionary war taking place on the Italian peninsula. Both the motivated biases on the parts of the major powers and the imbalanced configuration of the European Continental system mutually reinforced each other; thus neither independent variable is causally prior to the other. With these preliminary comments in mind, I now turn to the motivations for the war.

At the Paris conference of 1856 terminating the Crimean War, Austria extended its perfidy towards Russia by demanding that the latter lose Bessarabia to Moldavia as well as lose its right to operate a navy on the Black Sea. Gorchakov, the new Russian foreign minister who succeeded Nesselrode,

famously stated that "Russia is not sulking; she is silently biding her time."[3] While Alexander II longed to overturn the terms of the Paris conference, he knew that Russia was militarily too weak to do so. It was important to concentrate on domestic imperatives and to disengage from an activist foreign policy until the bases of national power could be rebuilt.[4] What this meant was that Russia would not provide troops for aggressive foreign policy adventures, but this did not preclude Russia from cutting a deal with another revisionist state by offering benevolent neutrality in exchange for aid in overturning the Paris conference terms of 1856. Thus, Russia informally isolated itself from being a supporter of the status quo in Europe to being a revisionist on the cheap.[5]

Napoleon III longed to undo the terms of the 1815 Vienna conference that, in part, gave Italy to Austria. Nevertheless, the temporal power of the Pope in Rome was maintained by the strength of French troops. Napoleon aimed to rid himself of this situation but he had to walk a fine line between the Catholic clerics and the Ultramontanes in France that supported the Pope, on the one hand, and French public opinion that despised the autocracy of the Holy See, on

---

[3] Christian Friese, Russland und Preussen vom Krimkrieg bis zum Polnischen Aufstand (Berlin: Ost-Europa-verlag, 1931), p. 23. Cited in Werner E. Mosse, The Rise and Fall of the Crimean System, 1855-71 (London: Macmillan, 1962), p. 74.
[4] Curtiss plays down the diplomatic change arguing, instead, that Russia had a primitive, agricultural economy poorly suited to an aggressive imperialist power. See, John S. Curtiss, "Russian Diplomacy in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," South Atlantic Quarterly, vol. 72, no. 3 (Summer 1973), p. 405.
[5] The degree to which the Black Sea clauses humiliated Alexander II is chronicled by Mosse, The Rise and Fall of the Crimean System, 1855-71, ibid. Mosse reveals the degree to which Sardinia indulged the Russian navy from 1857-8 in order to gain an ally for its opportunism, but passes over the Franco-Russian connection.

the other hand. Napoleon was an adventurer who talked himself into believing that the natural frontiers of France might be restored by taking Nice and Savoy from Austria. Further, he thought that the rest of the terms of the Vienna conference would crumble by the consequent unification of Italy by war but without the necessity of another major power war. Walewski, his conservative foreign minister, thought otherwise. Consequently, in January 1858 Napoleon circumvented his own diplomat and secretly wrote the tsar as to the possibility of a joint revisionist adventure expressing hope that "a great chance might occur in which they could march side by side."[6]

Domestic politics was the driving force behind Napoleon's impulse. His arrival to power through coup d'etat and the consequent autocratic nature of his rule was the price to pay for a return to economic prosperity in France.[7] In 1857, an economic crisis threatened the stability of the Second Empire and the emperor's raison d'etre was being called into question. Opponents of the costs of empire challenged Napoleon's leadership. In order to combat this issue the emperor believed that achieving a striking success in foreign policy could restore his reputation with the French people.[8] Yet, it is not clear that the French had failed to renormalize for the territorial losses inflicted by the 1815 Vienna conference. Walewski believed that the time for a revision of the Vienna treaty was not ripe and that the French people would interpret participation in a war in

---

[6] Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 101.
[7] Roger Price, The French Second Empire: An Anatomy of Political Power (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Chapter 7.

Italy as "an adventure and a disruption of the general peace for personal interest."[9]

The catalyst for action by Napoleon was the assassination attempt on his life by the Italian patriot and terrorist Orsini. Relations with Britain were strained as it became evident that Orsini hatched his plot in London. A demand by Napoleon that London clamp down on revolutionary activity met with a populist retort that Britain would not be dictated to by a foreign power. Palmerston's government fell when he attempted to assuage the emperor and it was replaced by a mediocre Tory government. A state visit to Paris by Queen Victoria and the Consort failed to mend relations as Napoleon shocked them with a military display of his new steam-powered navy. Invasion war scares ensued in Britain producing the Volunteer Panic of 1859-60.

Napoleon's first impulse was to side with Austria against Italian revolutionary activity despite his belief that Austria was the last state with whom he would ally. This was a fleeting preference; the emperor strangely considered Orsini a hero, thought of pardoning him, and had the assassin's appeal on the scaffold for French intervention to free Italy published. Then the Sardinian king Victor Emanuel's prime minister, Cavour, outbid Austria and offered to Napoleon an Italian war of unification against Austria, as well as a dynastic

---

[8] Price, The French Second Empire: An Anatomy of Political Power, ibid., p. 409.
[9] E. Chalamon de Bernardy, Un fils de Napoleon: Le Compte Walewski, 1810-1869 (Paris, 1954) [unpublished thesis], p. 544. Cited in G.J. Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," The Historical Journal, vol. 20, no. 1 (March 1977), p. 130.

marriage of the king's daughter to the emperor's reprobate cousin prince Napoleon (Plon Plon).[10] Victor Emanuel made a famous speech that inflamed Austrian sensibilities when he declared a 'cry of anguish' by the Italians against the despotism of the Austrians and their inevitable march toward freedom.

Napoleon and Cavour met at Plombières in July 1858 to concoct the secret plan for a war of aggression against Austria. France would receive Savoy and Nice as compensation for helping Sardinia defeat Austria and setting up a kingdom of Upper Italy from the 'Adriatic to the Alps'. Italy would become a federation of four states under the presidency of the Pope—the kingdom of Upper Italy or Piedmont augmented by Lombardy-Venetia; Parma and Modena; the kingdom of Etruria composed of Tuscany and most of the Papal states; a kingdom of Naples. Papal Rome would be reduced to the patrimony of St. Peter.[11] That Napoleon and Cavour had motivated biases to precipitate a war against Austria but to make the latter appear as the aggressor is found in the

---

[10] The kingdom of Sardinia is also alternatively referred to in histories as Sardinia-Piedmont or Piedmont-Sardinia. Sardinia, Piedmont, Savoy, Nice, and Liguria (to include Genoa) comprised the holdings of the House of Savoy as a consequence of the Vienna treaty of 1815. Emanuel was the crown of the House of Savoy. I will individually refer to the interests, both of Sardinia, and of Piedmont, respectively, throughout the narrative where appropriate because they are not necessarily synonymous. Nevertheless, it should be understood that the interests of both states are related through Emanuel's rule.

[11] Count Camillo Cavour, Luigi Chiala, ed., Lettere Inedite, vol. 3, nos. 1-14 (Turin: Roux ec., 1887). Cited in Robert W. Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 381.

count's cynical report to Emanuel that "this search for a cause of war [is] so difficult to find."[12]

At Napoleon's direction Plon Plon met with Alexander at Warsaw and sounded him on a Franco-Russian entente. Gorchakov records that Alexander responded by stating that "Russia had wisely retired from the role of Agamemnon, and the habit of letting herself be exploited to the detriment of her own proper interests."[13] As Thurston argues, this was a clear break from the conservative status quo supporting diplomacy of Nicholas I. The key here is that Alexander was not necessarily being risk acceptant for gain; rather, the new tsar was "responding objectively to a different world that he had no part in shaping. And the salient characteristic of that world was its unkindness to those who neglected opportunities."[14]

Plon Plon later met with Kiselev, the Russian ambassador in Paris, and the subject of a war in Italy was discussed. Plon Plon inquired as to the degree to which France could count on Russian support. Although the tsar was not interested in declaring a war should a crisis erupt in Italy, Kiselev nevertheless assured prince Napoleon of Russia's cooperation with France. Plon Plon's aide, La Roncière Le Noury, was dispatched to St. Petersburg where he offered the tsar

---

[12] Count Camillo Cavour, Luigi Chiala, ed., Lettere Inedite, ibid. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy, ibid., p. 381.
[13] Gorchakov correspondence, Württembergisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Stuttgart, G 2-8, Hausarchiv, Abteilung cccxiv, Büschel no. 7, October 12, 1858. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 127.

the drafts of two secret treaties. The first specified the conduct of both states at the outset of a war in Italy. Russia should agree to benevolent neutrality, but station sufficient troops on the Galician border in order to neutralize 150,000 Austrian troops, keep her Mediterranean force anchored in La Spezia and Toulon, exchange military missions with France, and deter Prussia from aggression against France. France would undertake a similar deterrent threat towards Britain on behalf of Russia. The second treaty specified that Russia would allow France to take Savoy and Nice, increase Emanuel's domains by ten million inhabitants and refrain from opposing independence for Hungary. In turn, Russia would receive France's support for an abrogation of the Black Sea clauses in a conference to be convened after the conclusion of the Italian war.[15]

Alexander wanted a single treaty and he would provide the military demonstration of support provided that he could be "certain that France for her part will consider her guarantee of Article Two of the Treaty of Paris as abolished and will work actively to get [the Black Sea clauses] annulled."[16] The tsar later added that he did not care to sever relations with Austria; rather, he would deter Prussia from aiding Austria by using the tactic that Austria employed towards Russia during the Crimean War, i.e., by deploying an observation corps of 70,000

---

[14] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 144.
[15] B.H. Summer, "The Secret Franco-Russian Treaty of 3 March 1859," The English Historical Review, vol. 48, no. 189 (January 1933), p. 72.
[16] Gorchakov correspondence to prince Napoleon, M.A.E. Memoires et Documents, Russie, vol. xlv, November 15, 1858. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 128.

troops on the Austrian border. Finally, Russia had no desire to be rewarded with more territory.[17]

The Panslavist, Nikolaevich, the tsar's younger brother, met with Napoleon in Paris where the emperor outlined a scenario in which "Russia arouses the slavs against Austria and is compensated with Galicia and revision of the Treaty of Paris."[18] What is interesting here is the moderated offer of a single treaty by France and Walewski's discovery and reaction towards the secret negotiations. Specifically, Walewski believed that France had been bested by Russia due to Plon Plon's diplomatic incompetence: "[France] had been duped by the Russians into a promise of benevolent neutrality and the assembly of an army corps whose destination is at least problematical since [Alexander] does not even want to break diplomatic relations with Austria."[19]

Napoleon failed to accept Walewski's resignation, fired Plon Plon, and put the foreign minister in charge of negotiations with Russia. Formerly, Walewski had no interest in a joint war with Russia in Italy. Although he could not disabuse Napoleon of this adventure, the French foreign minister was determined to make it more respectable. Although he had to indulge his

---

[17] Gorchakov correspondence to prince Napoleon, op. cit. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 128.
[18] A.P. Zablotskii-Desiatovskii, Graf P.D. Kiselev i ego vremia, vol. iii (St. Petersburg: Tip M.M. Stasi u levicha, 1883), p. 80. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 129.
[19] Chalamon de Bernardy, Un fils de Napoleon: Le Compte Walewski, 1810-1869, op. cit., p. 544. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 130.

superior, Walewski did so by making the terms unattractive to Russia, thus inducing a measure of risk aversion on the part of both parties. Walewski's anticipated negative regret is revealed in the manner in which he now demanded a preposterous treaty with Russia. Specifically, he demanded of Kiselev the size and the condition of the observation corps to be put on the Austrian border. Walewski justified this demand to Napoleon by observing that "the Russians are known for cheating at play; they do not think it dishonourable to do so. They behave in this way in all their transactions. Business is for them a game to be won by fair means or foul."[20] Discussions between France and Russia regarding the Italian campaign cooled considerably, which suited Walewski perfectly.

Taylor draws quite a different conclusion from the French foreign minister's diplomacy:

> "Walewski offered the Russians a vague hope of treaty revision at some point in the future in exchange for their benevolent neutrality in the coming war. Alexander II and Gorchakov knew that they were being tricked; and Gorchakov would have liked to break off. Alexander, however, was obsessed with the treaty of Paris and recognized that war in Italy was the essential first step towards its revision; he therefore fell back on the usual manoeuvre of those who are at a loss in diplomacy and relied on a scamp's good faith. He wrote to Kiselev in Paris: 'I believe that Napoleon will do what he has promised; i.e., to annul the treaty of Paris, which is a perpetual nightmare to me.'"[21]

---

[20] Chalamon de Bernardy, Un fils de Napoleon: Le Compte Walewski, 1810-1869, op. cit., p. 833. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 130.

[21] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 106.

As Thurston argues, Taylor's diplomatic account is oversimplified so as to heighten the dramatic possibilities of the narrative.[22] Rather, Alexander, unlike his father, gave much more leeway to his impressive diplomats to craft an agreement with France, even though the tsar ultimately made the final decision. Even though Kiselev and Gorchakov both wanted a Franco-Russian entente, the Russian ambassador was much more circumspect about abetting France in Austria whereas the foreign minister welcomed the war as a means to taking Europe's mind off the Near East. Gorchakov was a more seasoned diplomat than was Kiselev; he was also more risk acceptant for gain. But he tempered this predilection by offering the French very little in the way of support other than benevolent neutrality which was relatively costless and might actually bring benefits through the annulment of the Black Sea clauses. In contrast, Kiselev believed that war could not stay limited; he also believed that a revision of the Black Sea clauses could not take place without a general war.[23]

Napoleon continued to call the tune and was the driving force behind the aggressive diplomacy. The French press was given free rein to insult the Austrians and the possibility of war was perhaps one of the worst kept secrets by November 1858. The Moniteur published tirades against Papal misgovernment and La Presse, opined "we do not love war, and hope that it will some day disappear from the surface of Europe, we should nonetheless like to see one war,

---

[22] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 122, fn. 2.

and that one directed against Austria."[24] Moreover, Napoleon deliberately insulted Hübner, the Austrian ambassador in Paris at a New Year's Day reception in which the emperor publicly lamented the fact that relations between both countries had deteriorated. Hübner misunderstood Napoleon's motivated bias to precipitate a war with Austria choosing instead to believe that the propertied classes and the clerics in France would not allow it. Moreover, the Austrian ambassador failed to conceive that Napoleon had in mind a limited war and was enlisting other states to hold the ring for him. Kiselev hosted a dinner later that month to celebrate the decision by Russia to support France and Sardinia in Austria with benevolent neutrality. Instead, Hübner mistook the festivities as an attempt to put a good face on a deteriorating Franco-Russian relationship: "The Russians are beginning to understand that their flirtations with France are coming to naught. This comedy has had its day, and Kiselev was wrong to use such means to try to maintain the illusion."[25]

The secret treaty, signed at the beginning of March 1859, gave Napoleon less than Walewski had demanded of Gorchakov. While Russia would maintain benevolent neutrality while France took Savoy (Nice was excluded), nothing was

---

[23] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., pp. 133-44.
[24] Pierre de La Gorce, Historire de la Seconde République, vol. 2 (Paris: Plon, 1904), p. 374. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 382.
[25] Joseph de Hübner, Neuf ans de souvenirs d'un ambassadeur d'Autriche à Paris, vol. 2 (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et cie, 1904), p. 264. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 131.

mentioned of a Russian military demonstration on the Austrian border. A peace conference at the conclusion of the war would address alterations of both the Vienna and Paris treaties to the satisfaction of both parties.[26]

In Bismarck's phrase, Britain made 'à trois' in Europe out of five great powers with France and Russia. If Russia merely promised not to interfere with France in Austria, British public opinion espoused 'Italy for Italians', but not much more. This largely left Austria isolated and Prussia had its own reasons not to come to her aid (more of this later).[27] The conclusion of the Crimean War left a sour mood in Britain and, while not isolationist, the British now expressed only moral disapproval of unprovoked aggression instead of holding the fabled balance by leaguing with a victim state against an aggressor. A series of Tory and Liberal governments came and went during this period and were largely indistinguishable from each other in foreign policy outlook because both were suffused with Peelites and Cobdenites who were essentially non-interventionist. Both the court openly, and the Tories secretly, supported the Austrians, but both knew that British public opinion would not actively support maintaining Austria in Italy. Despite this latter sentiment, even Palmerston, who was predisposed to an alignment with France, had to publicly argue in February 1859 that "no Power

---

[26] Summer, "The Secret Franco-Russian Treaty of 3 March 1859," op. cit., p. 72.
[27] This is a weak example of Schweller's imbalanced system in which revisionists outnumber status quo powers. In this instance, France and Sardinia were revisionist whereas most of the other powers either did not offer much in the way of revisionist activity while others were fairly indifferent to the issue at hand. See, Randall L. Schweller, Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

could violate the settlement of 1815 by attempting, without reason or cause, to dispossess Austria of what that treaty gave her. [Alluding to an Austro- French war over the possession of Lombardy, Palmerston stated that] this would be to involve Europe in calamities…for a cause which, however in the abstract desirable, would by no means justify such a war."[28] He stated this because Queen Victoria was so strongly non-interventionist to the point that Russell, then foreign secretary, complained that "to leave France to settle with Austria the future condition of Italy would be to withdraw voluntarily from the first rank among the Powers of Europe."[29]

Napoleon opened the Legislature with the words 'L'Empire, c'est la paix,' but his speech was not reassuring on this score. Moreover, the government-inspired pamphlet L'Empire et Italie repeatedly denounced Austria's stranglehold on the minor states of the Italian peninsula. Cowley, the British ambassador in Paris, asked Napoleon to state frankly whether he was for peace or war. The emperor stated that he was for peace, but unafraid of war, and that he feared it to be inevitable in this instance. Napoleon then asked why Britain did not ally with France since it hated Austria's presence in Italy as well. Cowley answered: "if [the emperor] attempted without reason any scheme so iniquitous, he would have both the moral and material efforts of England arrayed against

[28] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, vol. clii, pp. 89-90.
[29] Lord John Russell, George P. Gooch, ed., Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, 1840-1878, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green, 1925), p. 238.

him…[France could best] help Italy by pacific means rather than by drawing the sword."[30]

Speaking in the House of Lords, Malmesbury, the foreign secretary, was hardly more effective, arguing on the one hand of his sympathies for the Austrians, who are of similar Teutonic origin but with a despotic government, and on the other hand of his sympathies for the Sardinians, who are of not the same race or descent as Britons, but who aspire to democratic government.[31] Seton-Watson notes that such contradictory sentiments conveyed a sense of weakness and hesitancy abroad; it incensed Vienna but encouraged Turin, precisely the opposite intent of the British foreign secretary.[32]

Thus, Britain was predisposed to mediate but not to punish an actual aggressor to the peace. At Malmesbury's instruction, Cowley's plan was to neutralize Piedmont. Austria, in turn, would renounce her rights of interference in the Italian central states. Clarendon, speaking in the House of Lords, was more clear-eyed than was Malmesbury concerning this dismal prospect for peace: "That one despotic Power has proposed to another despotic Power that by means of a Congress a third despotic Power should pave the way for liberal institutions in Italy."[33] Not surprisingly, Piedmont vetoed Cowley's peace plan. Cavour

---

[30] Theodore Martin, Life of the Prince Consort, vol. 4 (London: Smith, Elder, & co., 1880-91), pp. 422-23.
[31] James Harris, 3rd Earl of Malmesbury, Memoirs of an Ex-Minister, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley, 1884), p. 167.
[32] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 388.
[33] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, vol. cliii, op. cit., p. 1843.

knew that mediation would ruin his patient efforts over years to goad Austria into war without exposing Italian complicity to bring about this event. Cavour was offered British attempts to achieve liberal reforms in other parts of Italy (Piedmont was unquestionably liberal whereas the rest of Italy was authoritarian and resigned, if not pleased, to remain so). It was explained to Hudson, the British ambassador in Turin, that Italy did not require more liberalism, but rather national independence even if liberal reforms were a casualty and a military dictatorship was installed.[34]

Austria pretended to accede to the British plan to put itself in a good diplomatic light, but it secretly instructed the Italian states not to ask for a renunciation of their treaties with the former.[35] Russia wanted France to appear reasonable as well. Thus Kiselev petitioned Napoleon to propose a conference himself which would improve the emperor's popularity at home as well as mitigate German mistrust of French intentions.[36] Napoleon acceded to the conference proposal as a means toward driving Austria into war. Russia, in turn, hoped to use the conference as a means to keep the war limited. Prussia was the driving factor and Russia did not want to have to choose between its entente with France and having to fight Prussia should it attack France. Russia's long-term goal was to split France from Britain in order to effect a revision of the Black

---

[34] Denis Mack Smith, Cavour (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), p. 156.
[35] Franco Valesecchi, La mediazione europea e la definizione dell' aggressore alla viglia della guerra del 1859 (Roma: Vittoriano, 1938), p. 32. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 109.

Sea clauses. For Prussia, Italy was of minor importance; it had its design on Schleswig-Holstein and it needed British help to procure it. Thus, Prussia was not willing to oppose Britain by allying with Russia. The Prussian position would soon become a good deal more complicated than this. But for now, neutrality suited Britain, Russia, and Prussia and the peace conference was a means to achieving this.

All of the combatants did their best to sabotage the peace conference. Plon Plon invited Cavour to restate his case to Napoleon for war in Italy. Again, Walewski threatened to resign should a conservative foreign policy not be followed. Although Napoleon appeared to give in to him, ultimately he sided with Cavour by promising that France would not abandon her allies.[37]

Buol, the Austrian foreign minister, demanded that Sardinia disarm immediately and unconditionally. He knew full well that the Austrians would be forced to make concessions at the conference without a shot having been fired. The disarmament demand was intended to convey to the conference the aggressive nature of the Italians. Cavour was pressed by Napoleon to disarm immediately, but the Italian prime minister demanded a seat at the conference table as his reward for doing so. Buol then blundered by holding to the unconditional nature of his demands. As Taylor correctly notes, Austria was

---

[36] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 130.
[37] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., pp. 132-33.

determined to deter Italy, not with French persuasions or British promises for the future, but by Austrian threats.[38]

This was an egregious mistake on the part of Buol for it left Austria completely isolated in Europe. Sardinian obstreperousness had put Austria in a better light with Britain and Prussia. But Austria's motivated bias to punish Italian revolutionary activity caused it to overreach. It wrongly believed that British and Prussian sympathy for Austria would continue regardless of whether it remained restrained or not. One could argue that the Austrians suffered from a cognitive bias in believing that its failure to fight in this instance would lead to dismal results similar to those experienced when it failed to fight during the Crimean War. But such bias would have been corrected by taking the time to ascertain the Italo-French response. Both the latter were losing diplomatic ground and were weakening because Sardinia did not even have the excuse of suppressing populist uprisings in Lombardy and Venetia as it did in 1848. But Austria had no intention of even meeting Sardinia halfway by admitting it to the conference. Thus, Malmesbury reported to Cowley that Buol was told that a war would soon assume a revolutionary character and that, while Britain would remain neutral, public opinion would actively sympathize with the Italian nationalists. Buol, Malmesbury continued, "has received our counsels of prudence with nearly equal sulkiness, and I think the best attitude for us now is

[38] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 111.

to fold our arms like men who have advised madmen in vain to refrain from mutual follies…and leave them with sorrow to their fate."[39]

Cavour rejected the unconditional nature of Buol's demands. Malmesbury made one last plea for peace by urging the foreign minister to delay an Austrian attack on Piedmont, again reiterating that Austria would find itself completely isolated. Buol retorted, "perhaps, but we are fighting against Revolution and for European order."[40] Austrian forces marched into Sardinia on April 29, 1859, thus opening the war. Cavour was at the point of despair when Napoleon rescued him with the proclamation that either Austria must rule up to the Alps or "Italy must be free from the Alps to the Adriatic."[41] Walewski telegraphed Cavour promising full military support. French forces traversed the Alps and landed at Genoa. On the battlefield the Austrians were both unprepared and incompetent. On June 4, the Austrians were defeated at Magenta and routed from the plains of Lombardy. Victor Emanuel and Napoleon jointly entered Milan on June 8. On June 24, the Austrians were defeated at Solferino as they attempted to break out of the fortresses of the Quadrilateral. A revolutionary conflagration instigated by Cavour drove the grand duke from Tuscany and the dukes, from Parma, and Modena, respectively. Both the Pope and the King of Naples, the latter a hated

---

[39] Harris, 3rd Earl of Malmesbury, Memoirs of an Ex-Minister, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 150-51.
[40] Harris, 3rd Earl of Malmesbury, Memoirs of an Ex-Minister, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 321.
[41] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 390.

Bourbon supported by Russia, knew that they were next in line to be overthrown.

Buol mistakenly believed that Britain and Prussia would provide Austria with support should Napoleon side with Sardinia. Until late he retained the motivated bias to believe that Napoleon would compel Sardinia to submit.[42] None of this occurred and the noncombatant powers agreed to keep the war limited. Cowley conveyed to Malmesbury, Kiselev's suggestion for mutual neutrality: "[Kiselev] sees no harm in Austria and France cutting each other's throats and weakening themselves reciprocally."[43] This comment was a manner of indicating that the price for intervention on the part of the noncombatant powers had increased considerably, in particular for Prussia, as will be discussed shortly.

Kiselev's comment is also the key to understanding the mutually reinforcing dynamics of systemic imbalance and the motivated biases to make gains. A number of dynamics peculiar to the case at hand operated, as will be briefly summarized. First, Austria was roundly hated in Europe and a number of the major powers failed to reckon that a stable Austria was still important for

---

[42] Heinrich Ritter von Srbik, Deutsche Einheit: idee und wirklichkeit vom Heilgen reich bis Königgrätz, vol. 2 (Munich: F. Bruckmann ag., 1935), p. 352. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 390.

[43] Public Record Office, London. Foreign Office 519/225, April 25, 1859, Cowley to Malmesbury. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 136.

avoiding systemic war in Europe.[44] Schleinitz, the Prussian foreign minister, only belatedly realized that Russia should not allow Austria to be utterly overthrown in Italy. He had reason to be concerned. Openly breaking with Austria would likely cause the small German states in the south to rally to Austria's side, thus isolating Prussia in Germany.[45] Moreover, revolutionary activity in Italy could easily spread to Hungary, and then Poland, the latter of which would seriously concern Russia.[46] The second factor is the relative unimportance of Italy to the rest of Europe. As Taylor notes, Italy from a diplomatic perspective, counted for more presently than she would later on. Still, she did not count for much and this was likely the reason that Napoleon made a play there for restoring French prestige in Europe. At this early date, a trial of strength on the Rhine was beyond French power and for France to engage itself in the Mediterranean rather than in central Europe was a confession of its weakness. Moreover, Austria was isolated whereas Prussia was not and had many suitors for its friendship.[47] Finally, Italian independence was largely supported throughout Europe with the caveat that a revolutionary contagion not take hold. Emanuel and Cavour were political

---

[44] In a charitable moment, Gorchakov realized this declaring to Thun, the Austrian ambassador in Russia, that "[if Austria had not already existed,] she would have to be invented for the peace and equilibrium of Europe" (Thun correspondence to Rechberg, the Austrian foreign minister, in Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, 38 P.A. X/49, December 8, 1860). Cited in Katherine Schach Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," in The International History Review, vol. 2, no. 4 (October 1980), p. 559.
[45] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 137.
[46] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 113.
[47] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 99-100.

impressarios, having gained the gratitude of France and Britain during the Crimean War by dispatching 15,000 Sardinian troops in timely fashion to aid in the fall of Sebastapol. That Sardinia was given a seat at the Paris peace congress and the subject of Italian independence handsomely raised by Clarendon, the British representative, though ultimately tabled for the time, spoke well of Italian feeling throughout Europe.[48] Thus, a number of the major powers were happy about their preferences for Italian independence (they would have liked to take pieces for themselves), but were quite ambivalent about Italian unification per se. Russia had ulterior reasons for dispossessing Austria of Italy on the one hand, but it greeted unification with loud disapprobation on the other hand.[49] Napoleon's eventual preference reflected Europe's ambivalent nature concerning the Italian war. According to Valsecchi,

> "when put to the test, Napoleonic policy revealed all its contradictions and ambiguities. The French emperor could not and would not approve the ever-increasing expansion of the Italian national movement, by giving it his support. The unification of Italy was neither in his interest nor in his plans. But he could not, nor did he wish to, oppose the liberation movement as an enemy, having himself set the movement in motion, and he could not repudiate the costly and glorious heritage of Magenta and Solferino."[50]

---

[48] René Albrecht-Carrié, Italy from Napoleon to Mussolini (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 39.
[49] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 121.
[50] Franco Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Martin Gilbert, ed., A Century of Conflict 1850-1950: Essays for A.J.P. Taylor (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1966), p. 51; J.M. Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 192.

Victoria was fearful for Britain as well: "[Napoleon] sees…only what he wishes. If he made war in Italy it would in all probability lead to war with Germany and if north Germany will embrace Belgium and if so it must according to our guarantees drive us into the quarrel. France must thus have the whole of Europe against her as in 1814 and 15."[51]

The Queen's comment here is theoretically relevant because her strictly non-interventionist stance is quite at odds with it. This is an extreme example of a motivated bias to hope that Europe would combine to deter unprovoked aggression but not to take any individual action to bring about the desired outcome. Theoretically, balanced systems can at least provide an organized counterpoise to those with motivated biases to conduct aggression. Such formidable opposition should at least give aggressors some reason for pause. But imbalanced systems can reinforce the motivated biases to precipitate aggression when status quo states recognize that opposition is necessary but offer little more than moral hectoring as a response.

To return to the immediate dynamics of diplomacy, Napoleon wanted to keep Prussia neutralized by offering it a guarantee against poaching on German federal territories. Alexander offered to underwrite this offer.[52] The French emperor was prepared to offer a good deal more to sweeten the deal. The resurrection of France's natural frontiers was never far from his mind. In

---

[51] Royal Archives, Windsor, J14/2, December 9, 1858, Victoria to Malmesbury. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 137, fn. 72.

exchange for Prussian concessions on the left bank of the Rhine, Napoleon would approve an extension of Prussian territory in North Germany at the expense of both France and Austria. Such an exchange of territories would promote Prussian supremacy in Germany.[53] The French emperor expressed this interest on a number of occasions to Wilhelm, the prince regent of Prussia, who succeeded Frederick William IV in 1858 after the latter became physically incapacitated. The German king had looked favorably on a Prusso-Franco-Russian relationship in order to punish Austria for its perfidy during the Crimean War. Unfortunately for Napoleon, the prince regent was inclined in an opposite direction with a liberal alliance with Britain and Austria even though the latter was governed despotically. The German liberals were also nationalistic and this stance favored solidarity with kindred Austria.

Worse, France would have to proceed in Italy largely at its own risk. It had to mind its friends as well as its enemies. Russia provided France with only benevolent neutrality. Nikolaevich was forced from the diplomatic scene because his preference for active Russian participation with the French in a war in Italy was seen as being wildly impractical by Alexander.[54] This is perhaps the best evidence that a prospect approach to risk trumps an expected utility explanation. If we are to believe Taylor's dramatic account, Russia could be considered

---

[52] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 111.
[53] Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., p. 54.
[54] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 133.

contingently risk acceptant for gain. He asserts that if Prussia attacked France, Russia would not defend it. Rather, Russia would attack Austria, thus effecting a revision of the Black Sea clauses without allowing France a revision of the Vienna treaty.[55] Napoleon was not attuned to this double game on the part of the Russians. Alexander, through Gorchakov, would weakly attempt to deter Prussia from intervening through diplomatic cajolery, though he would not inform France of this for fear of emboldening Napoleon into conducting the Italian war in a revolutionary manner.[56]

The last part of the account is true but it is difficult to substantiate the earlier assertion because Prussia did not attack France and no documentary evidence is adduced by Taylor to indicate that Russia intended to sell France out in this manner. Rather, Napoleon would have been happy for Russia to attack Austria in the event that Prussia attacked France and he was disappointed to find that Gorchakov demurred when the hypothetical question was posed.[57] Once the hostilities began, Kiselev revealed his anticipated negative regret by reversing preference and lobbying for aiding France to the fullest extent. This did not please Gorchakov, who continued to call the foreign policy tune, because such open expression of Russian support was likely to embolden France, thus obliging

---

[55] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 112-13.
[56] Francois Charles-Roux, Alexandre II, Gorchakoff et Napoleon III (Paris: Plon, 1913), p. 265. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 391.
[57] Sergei Gorianov, "Les étapes de l'alliance franco-russe (1853-1861)," in Revue de Paris, vol. 12 (1912), p. 540. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 140.

Prussia to intervene. Gorchakov instructed the French ministers and the press to refrain from abusing the term 'nationality' because it allowed Napoleon's detractors to accuse him of following a revolutionary course of action.[58] Thus, in this more accurate diplomatic account, Russia was being contingently risk acceptant for gain, but not in the manner that Taylor envisages. Recalling Thurston's earlier comment regarding Alexander, the tsar could not afford to pass up the opportunity to make gains in the Near East as a consequence of limited war in Italy. But he would not precipitate a general war, either by goading Prussia into action, or by fighting against Prussia and/or Austria, respectively, in order to effect a mere revision of the Black Sea clauses.

The Ballplatz in Vienna was quite alarmed at France's entreaties toward Prussia because it was convinced that France had in mind to separate Prussia and Austria thereby bringing about the conquest of Venetia by Italy. According to Werther, the Prussian ambassador to Paris: "at this prospect [Vienna felt] the French emperor would not be opposed to a strong and united Italy, which would completely paralyze Austria. Having achieved this aim, France would turn against Prussia and Germany in the certainty that Austria, paralyzed by the Italian menace, would no longer be able to come to the aid of her German confederates. The success of Louis Napoleon's policy consisted exclusively in his ability to isolate the Great Powers at the right moment. He put these tactics to the

---

[58] F. Rotstein, "K istorii franko-russkogo soglasheniia 1859 g." Krasnii Arkhiv, vol. lxxxviii, no. 3 (1938), p. 230. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 136.

test by provoking the Crimean War against Russia and subsequently the war in Italy against Austria. He was undoubtedly thinking of doing the same thing with Prussia and Germany in order to realize the so-called natural frontier on the Rhine."[59]

In retrospect, the Ballplatz attributed more aggressiveness to France than is warranted but, given this mistaken viewpoint, one would expect the former to make concessions to Prussia in order to avoid the predicted outcome. It did not. Rather, Vienna was stubbornly risk acceptant for loss to the point that it refused to prioritize the holdings that it would have to sacrifice in order to retain the more important ones. Thus, Prussia was not deterred by Russia's hollow threats, but rather by Austria's unwillingness to put Prussia in command of the German federal forces fighting on the Rhine. Such a move would grant Prussia supremacy in Germany. This was not an unreasonable demand since Austria had its hands full in Italy. Bismarck, then Prussian ambassador to Russia, acutely realized that for Prussia to work with Austria without achieving command in order to deter France from aggression on the Rhine would merely abet Austrian hegemony in Germany.[60] In sum, Austria was decidedly risk acceptant for loss as it refused to give way to Prussia in Germany, to France and Sardinia in Italy, and

---

[59] Werther, Prussian ambassador in Paris, to Schleinitz, Prussian foreign minister, June 12, 1860 in Erich Brandenburg, Otto Hoetzsch, and Hermann Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 2, (Oldenburg: Historischen Reichskommission, 1938), note 195. Cited in Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., p. 54.

[60] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 390.

to Russia in the Near East. As argued, Austria was also a bit risk acceptant for gain in Germany by asking Prussia to fight its battles without giving due credit. It was also significantly risk acceptant for gain by subverting the peace conference and forcing war on Sardinia in order to humiliate it. This Austrian preference reversal was precipitated by the blundering Buol but sanctioned by Franz Joseph when the status quo had not materially changed. It is certain that Austria would have had to make some concessions at the peace conference, but since it had all of the treaty rights in its favor, Italian independence and unity would not have been granted by the other major powers. The motivated bias to punish Sardinia was a fateful mistake on the part of Austria.

Napoleon could win battles, but not the war. The carnage at Solferino took a toll on his psyche. Moreover, serious domestic disturbances occurred in France as a consequence of the war. For the time, both of these considerations caused the emperor to quail because he worried that he was unleashing something that he could not stop.[61] To Kiselev he later stated, "the war threatened to become general; insurrection in Hungary would have been helpful, but not without disadvantages. After Hungary would come Poland, then the Christians of the East. All that would have too much complicated a war already messy enough."[62] Napoleon was also unaware that Austria could no longer provide reinforcements

---

[61] Prosper Mérimée, Lettres à une inconnue, vol. 1 (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1874), July 12, 1859, p. 60. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 140.

and had unreliable forces in order to meet her commitments with Prussia in the German confederation and was thus on the verge of capitulating in Italy.[63] Finally, the French emperor found that the promise given to him by Alexander—to provide a military demonstration on the Galician border but not codified in the secret treaty—was hollow if not a fraud. This was revealed in an exchange between both sovereigns. Napoleon wrote to the tsar, "…the position of Russia will naturally have great weight in the circumstances that are developing now, but…permit me to say that it must be sharply defined and completely clear. Only such a diversion as Y.M. promised me…can lead to favourable results, since Austria is presently secure on her northern border."[64] Alexander replied that Austria would appropriately remain uncertain of her security and that "I am certain there would be no advantage to be gained by clarifying the position I have taken. Uncertainty fits my intentions—it is a bridle whose necessity circumstances have already proved."[65]

---

[62] Gorianov, "Les étapes de l'alliance franco-russe (1853-1861)," op. cit., p. 540. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., pp. 140-41.
[63] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 140.
[64] Rotstein, "K istorii franko-russkogo soglasheniia 1859 g." op. cit., p. 232. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 136.
[65] Rotstein, "K istorii franko-russkogo soglasheniia 1859 g." op. cit., p. 232. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 136.

Unstable preference reversals.

Napoleon was the first to propose an armistice with Austria. He had felt betrayed by Alexander. True, he was afraid of Prussian intervention,[66] but he was also dissatisfied by the lack of Russian support and told Kiselev as such.[67] The Russian corps did not materialize thus leaving France to fight alone on the Galician border.[68] The British failed to support Napoleon and he doubted the solidity of Italian unity. Russian and Ultramontane pressure wanted the conflict to end, the former because of apprehension over revolutionary contagion and the latter because of clerical support for the Pope.[69]

Walewski reasserted himself here. Gorchakov tried to cobble together a Franco-Russo-Austrian alliance in order to be paid for his meager efforts. But because France could not prevail, Walewski then punished Russia by stipulating that the three eastern emperors come to agreement on the Near East before France would entertain a revision of the Paris treaty. Rechberg, the new Austrian foreign minister, threw cold water on the scheme by being "opposed in principle to the formation of small, independent states, republics, or Principalities which,

---

[66] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., pp. 192-93.
[67] Another interpretation is that Napoleon developed a luke-warm commitment to this adventure. See, E. Ann Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 6.
[68] Rotstein, "K istorii franko-russkogo soglasheniia 1859 g." op. cit., p. 239. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 141.
[69] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 398.

sooner or later, must fall prey to the Colossus of the North [Prussia]."[70] Additionally, France declared that its price for participation was a revision of the Vienna treaty. Austria would not participate, having just ceded much territory in Italy.[71]

Instead, Napoleon's bitterness led him to take revenge on his allies. Thus, he would cut a deal with Austria at Villafranca (just as he had reversed course and reconciled with Russia over Britain to conclude the Crimean War). Sardinia would not get its reward in Italy; neither would Russia in the Near East nor Prussia in Germany. Sardinia, stripped of the fortresses of the Quadrilateral, would be more dependent on France than previously for its existence. An independent Italian peninsula would be denied to Britain.[72]

Napoleon proposed to Franz Joseph that he receive Lombardy which he would turn over to Cavour. Parma would remain in Piedmontese control. The Pope would recover Tuscany and Modena and head an Italian Confederation. Austria would retain Venetia. Napoleon would renounce his claims to Savoy and Nice, but he wanted to be reimbursed for the cost of the war.[73] Cavour resigned his office and raged at Napoleon, "this treaty will never be executed: I will turn

---

[70] Raoul Bossy, "Napoléon III et l'Autriche de Villafranca à Sadowa 1859-1866," in Revue d'histoire diplomatique vol. 73, no. 4 (September 1959), p. 111. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 142.
[71] Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, 64 P.A. X, Frankreich, November 6, 1859. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 142.
[72] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 114.
[73] Smith, Cavour, op. cit., p. 174.

conspirator." To which the French emperor declared, "to serve Italian independence I made war against the wish of Europe; as soon as the fate of my country seemed imperiled, I made peace." Napoleon told Cavour that to continue the war required 300,000 Italian troops that never materialized.[74]

Franz Joseph again appeared to reverse his preference by coming to terms with Napoleon instead of making concessions to Prussia. The Austrian deluded himself into believing that ceding Lombardy was counterbalanced by a restoration of the deposed rulers in central Italy. Franz Joseph preferred a compromise peace with France over Italy to ceding supremacy to Prussia in Germany as the price to be paid for Prussian assistance. Buol was dismissed as the foreign minister because of his diplomatic blundering and the emperor then tried to free Austria from its isolation by concluding an agreement with France in order to keep Austria in Italy.[75] One term of the armistice allowed Austria to retain continued influence in Italy as a member of a proposed federation of the Italian peninsula instead of a unified Italy.[76] Thus, it appeared that the insurance premium would be used in conservative fashion here. The Austrian emperor preferred to make concessions to Sardinia in order to retain what was left of his position in Italy. He was ceding part of his lawfully-granted endowments in

---

[74] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 398. Cavour believed that France was too deeply implicated to quit Italy despite the fact that he severely underprovided the promised number of troops. See, Smith, Cavour, op. cit., pp. 143-48, 56.
[75] Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," op. cit., p. 50.
[76] Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., p. 547.

order to avoid the certainties, either, of being forced to make unrecompensed concessions at the peace conference, on the one hand, or of being replaced by Prussia as head of the German confederation in exchange for diplomatic support to retain the Austrian status quo in Italy, on the other hand.

Napoleon accepted Franz Joseph's stipulation as long as the rulers were not restored to their thrones by force. This point had no basis in reality because a revolutionary contagion spread throughout Italy that ensured that exile for the deposed despotic rulers would be their only option.[77] Napoleon thus played the sorcerer's apprentice to Cavour's revolutionary machinations. The French emperor had not deceived Franz Joseph even though the former looked on with favor at the discomfiture of the deposed. Rather, the Austrian deluded himself once again by believing that the grand duke of Tuscany could restore himself to power without assistance. Moreover, merely ceding Lombardy could not stanch the Italian demand for independence that eluded official policy. A full-fledged revolution broke out in Emilia, in Romagna, and in Tuscany. Thus, Austria was being utterly defeated in Italy and it was in danger of receiving nothing for its compromise peace.

Immediately, both sides regretted their decisions to compromise. Napoleon had not liberated Venetia. Therefore, he was not entitled to Nice and Savoy, the very reason for which he went to war. Public opinion in France punished him for instigating the war; now it punished him for ending it in such a

---

[77] Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., p. 547.

desultory fashion. Thus, Napoleon contrived to wreck the Treaty of Villafranca, signed on November 10, 1859 in Zurich. Essentially, the treaty was a dead letter because, late in December, the French emperor launched an anonymously inspired pamphlet entitled Le Pape et le Congrès which argued that the Pope's spiritual authority was being hamstrung by his temporal power in Rome. Thus the States of the Church should be restricted to the Eternal City and the Patrimony of St. Peter; the Pope's defense should jointly be provided for by the Catholic Great Powers and the proposed Italian federation. Anti-Catholic Britain approved of this scheme, but the French clerics accused Napoleon of having "burnt the Pope on the altar of the English alliance."[78] Pius IX unwisely engaged in polemics against the pamphleteer and the Austrians demanded that Napoleon disavow himself from this opinion by guaranteeing the integrity of the Papal States.[79] When the French emperor refused to do so, the Austrians abandoned the peace conference. Cavour returned himself to power at this news and Napoleon tried to get him to refrain from directly incorporating Sardinia. Cavour demanded a plebiscite on the matter as well as plebiscites throughout Italy as to whether the other states would vote to be annexed by Piedmont. Napoleon could not defy this logic and he demanded Nice and Savoy as compensation for an increase in the power of Sardinia, subject, of course, to the outcome of a plebiscite in the former states. Napoleon regained his risk acceptance for gain. He stated none too tactfully to Emanuel that the Sardinian expansion, not merely to

[78] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 400.

the Adriatic, but now across the Apennines to the border of Rome was not contemplated in the original agreement. Thus, France's revised strategic security needs dictated the incorporation of both Nice and Savoy. The two states went overwhelmingly for reincorporation with France while Emilia and Tuscany joined Sardinia in opting for a unified Italy in March 1860. In April, Emanuel opened the first National Parliament of modern Italy.[80]

Continued risk aversion for gain by the non-combatant powers.

An expected utility explanation for the dynamics of this conflict should exhibit increased deterrence measures on the parts of the non-combatant states in response to the opportunistic aggression on the parts of France, Sardinia, and Austria, respectively. Some evidence of this thinking follows, but there is also little follow-up in the way of action. Rather, the non-combatant powers deterred the aggressive states by bidding up their demands for assistance rather than by threatening them with adverse intervention. As will be demonstrated, this is a manner of risk aversion for gains on the part of the status quo powers. Said another way, a status quo state needs to be handsomely recompensed in order to be tempted to make gains when others are clearly acting in an opportunistic manner, have overreached, and are in need of assistance.

Vague, but uneasy, fellow feeling for France throughout Europe that it was supporting Italian independence quickly gave way to consternation that Napoleon was determined to retrace the footsteps of his uncle on the Rhine after

---

[79] Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., p. 548.

vanquishing Austria.[81] Palmerston had been changing his mind regarding Napoleon when he wrote to Russell: "Till lately I had strong confidence in the fair intentions of Napoleon towards England, but of late I have begun to feel great distrust, and to suspect that his formerly expressed intention of avenging Waterloo has only lain dormant, and has not died away. He seems to have thought to lay his foundation by beating, and with our aid or with our concurrence or neutrality, first Russia, and then Austria, and by dealing with them generously to make them his friends in any subsequent quarrel with us."[82] Napoleon was attuned to this sentiment that was growing throughout Europe and he wrote a missive to be passed on to Palmerston stating rather unconvincingly: "Since Villafranca I have only had one thought and one aim—to inaugurate a new era of peace, and to live on good terms with all my neighbors, especially England. I had given up the claim to Savoy and Nice, and it was only the extraordinary enlargement of Piedmontese territory which made me reassert the right to restore to France provinces essentially French."[83]

Others were not assuaged as well. Earlier in the year the war party in Prussia forced the prince regent to station an observation corps on the banks of the upper Rhine. Bismarck told Gorchakov that French success might force the Prussians to intervene on behalf of the Austrians. In turn, Gorchakov reiterated

---

[80] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 401.
[81] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., pp. 203-4.
[82] Palmerston to Russell, November 4, 1859, in René Arnaud, translated by E.F. Buckley, Second Republic and Napoleon III (New York: Putnam, 1930), p. 167.

that he had restrained Napoleon from using the term 'nationalities' in his official statements and that Russia and Britain had obtained a promise from Sardinia to refrain from sending revolutionary committees into the Christian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. But after Magenta, Napoleon turned down Russian offers for peace and this disinterest continued to concern Prussia.[84] Alexander explained to Bismarck on June 16, 1859 that Napoleon had agreed to desist from planning an attack on the Dalmatian coast, but that the tsar had no interest in giving up his entente with France.[85]

Britain offered a new four-point peace plan in January 1860 that Napoleon immediately accepted. First, France and Austria were to refrain from interfering in central Italy unless invited by the five great powers. Second, French troops should evacuate from Rome and northern Italy. Third, Austria must be allowed to administer Venetia without interference. Finally, Britain and France would recognize the right of Sardinia to send troops into central Italy to implement a plebescite in favor of annexation to Piedmont should that possibility occur.[86]

Austria agreed to the second and third points, but objected to the other two points. Thus, Rechberg instead requested that Gorchakov support efforts to

---

[83] Napoleon to Persigny, French ambassador in London, July 25, 1859, cited in Arnaud, ibid., p. 167.
[84] Gorianov, "Les étapes de l'alliance franco-russe (1853-1861)," op. cit., p. 539. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 138.
[85] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 139.
[86] Arthur J. Whyte, The Political Life and Letters of Cavour 1848-1861 (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 348.

reinstate the traditional defensive Holy Alliance (Prussia, Austria, and Russia), to which the latter refused to recommend to Alexander. In turn, Gorchakov recommended that Austria join a Franco-Russian alliance. Gorchakov wanted to avoid a reassertion of the Crimean coalition of Britain, France, and Austria and he did this by arguing to Rechberg that the British proposal was a ploy to rescue France from its embarrassing Roman commitment.[87]

When Austria turned down Russia, Alexander then tried to restrain Napoleon in a Franco-Prusso-Russian alliance. At the tsar's urging, Napoleon met Wilhelm at Baden-Baden in June 1860, but the Frenchman was rebuffed when the latter demonstrated solidarity by inviting all of the German princes to attend. Vienna, in turn, was impressed by this spectacle and made yet another pitch for Prussian assistance in Italy. Gorchakov would not make a third in a putative Russo-Austro-Prussian alliance, but he was not averse to the latter two attempting a reconciliation.[88] Wilhem met with Franz Joseph at Teplitz on July 26, 1860 but the meeting was a repetition of the original entreaty. The crux of the matter was that Prussia could easily find allies whereas Austria remained isolated. Schleinitz prepared a memorandum detailing such: "The purpose of the negotiations is …to recognize that if Prussia concludes an alliance with Austria which guarantees the Veneto, she will be entitled to an adequate reward for the

---

[87] Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., pp. 550-51.

[88] Bismarck to Schleinitz, July 14, 1860 in Die Politischen Berichte des Fürsten Bismarck aus Petersburg und Paris, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1920), p. 133. Cited in

services rendered in the European cause and above all to the need of defending Austria. It is …well to be clear that it is Austria who needs help, whereas Prussia can easily find allies and is not dependent on Austrian help."[89]

Such leverage allowed Wilhelm to drive a hard bargain. If France tried to achieve the 'natural frontiers', both states would "face together the dangers which threatened them both…with joint resistance to a French attack on the two States; [and an undertaking] to oppose jointly, and if necessary by the force of arms, any French attempt to incorporate Belgium or parts of Swiss or Dutch territory."[90] If Sardinia attacked Austria, Prussia was not obliged to assist unless the federal territories were violated because this would provoke Sardinia and bring about a break with France. Concerning Prussian aims in Germany, Austria then made a vague promise to address them in the future. Valsecchi notes that, "as had already happened in 1859, Vienna refused to make concessions in Germany, and so Berlin had no intention of running any risks for Austrian interests in Italy."[91]

Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., p. 58.

[89] Memorandum from Schleinitz, July 20, 1860, in Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 2, op. cit., note 224. Cited in Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., p. 60.

[90] Franz Joseph, July 26-27, 1860, in Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 2, op. cit., note 229. Cited in Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., p. 61.

[91] Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., pp. 61-62.

Contemporaneously, Cavour held himself out as the arbiter of peace in Italy. He publicly disavowed charges of subversion made by the major European powers by arguing that the monarchy of the House of Savoy (Emanuel) was the best instrument for obviating anarchy and chaos in Italy. It appeared that a race was gearing up between a revived Holy Alliance which would coalesce against the revolution in Italy, on the one hand, and the unification of Italy on the other hand.[92] This race was won easily by the Italians because, as was just intimated and as will later be demonstrated, a revival of the Holy Alliance remained stillborn due to risk aversion for gain. Thus, the problem before Cavour was in "helping the revolution, but in such a way that in may appear in the eyes of Europe to have been a spontaneous act."[93] Nevertheless, he dreamed that after the conquest of Palermo would come the richer prizes of Rome and Venice. Cavour and Emanuel were conducting a monarchical revolution. Thus, the prime minister had to pretend to disavow the actions of the leftist Garibaldi with an open veto to the world, while secretly and tentatively approving them. The Redshirts had cryptic support from Turin to be diverted to Sicily on May 6, 1860 where they prevailed and thereafter sailed to the mainland. Cavour was concerned with Garibaldi's dictatorial methods and the possibility that the revolution might turn anti-monarchical.[94] Thus, as long as Rome was not

---

[92] Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., p. 53.
[93] Henry G. Elliot, Some Revolutions and Diplomatic Experiences (London: J. Murray, 1922), p. 21.
[94] Smith, Cavour, op. cit., p. 221.

attacked, Napoleon indicated in August 1860 that he would not intervene and thus allow Emanuel's forces to occupy Umbria, the Marches, and the other Papal States before Garibaldi could get there.

Napoleon did not want these instructions to Cavour to be made public. While he wanted to be rid of his duty to protect the Pope, Napoleon knew that the French Catholics would not tolerate an expulsion of His Holiness from Rome. This would surely occur were Garibaldi to sail from Messina to the mainland unchecked. Thompson identifies the main foreign policy problem that beset the Second Empire: "Ancient Rome had been the capital of a Mediterranean Empire, not of an Italian state. The inheritance of the Caesars had passed to the Popes, and their Temporal Power—the political and military control of the Papal States—was the symbol of a super-national government incompatible with a secular Kingdom of Italy."[95] This is why Napoleon feared a unified Italy. It spelled the end of the Vatican in Rome unless he could convince Cavour to adopt the notion of 'a free church in a free state' (he did). Napoleon could not publicly disavow Cavour's plan for a united Italy, on the one hand, but he could also not allow it, on the other hand. Thus, Napoleon's flirtation with risk acceptance for gain had run too far ahead of his essential risk aversion to avoid loss and he had to pull back. A lame attempt was made with the British, who were equally at a loss as to what policy to pursue in Italy. Both Palmerston's and Russell's riper judgments regarding Napoleon's intentions began to prevail. Two weeks earlier,

---

[95] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 198.

Russell regretted that Prussia had not gone to war with France in the previous year.[96] Now, upon further consideration, Russell publicly conceded that Austria regarded the annexation of Savoy by France as an event not worse than that of Tuscany to Sardinia whereas Alexander opined that Victor Emanuel was "free to give away his own province and Napoleon free to receive it."[97] In Alexander's opinion, one can see Gorchakov's influence to continue to favor the entente with France for what it might produce in the Near East. The British realized that they would have no allies on this issue and thus were loath to isolate themselves.

Thouvenal, who succeeded Walewski as foreign minister, suggested that the French and British fleets be dispatched to the Straits of Messina in order to waive Garibaldi off from transferring his expedition to the mainland. Russell was on the verge of acceding to this scheme when Lacaita, a trusted Italian nationalized in, and living in, London at the behest of Cavour, petitioned the British for non-intervention. It is doubtful that Garibaldi could have been deterred. Nevertheless, instead of working with the French, the British navy abetted Garibaldi's efforts, thus leaving France to act alone, which it would not.[98]

Garibaldi would surely have attacked Austrian occupied Venetia had Emanuel not taken control of the situation, thus perhaps making the war general

---

[96] Bernstorff, the Prussian ambassador to London, correspondence to Schleinitz, March 10, 1860, in Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 2, op. cit., note 94. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 403.
[97] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, vol. clvii, op. cit., March 26, 1860, p. 1255.
[98] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 207.

with Prussian intervention on behalf of Austria.[99] A phony quarrel was picked with the Pope and Emanuel's forces marched on September 11, 1860, ostensibly to restore order. "Diplomacy will make great cries, but will allow you to act,"[100] was Cavour's quip to Nigra, the Italian ambassador to France. The Papal states were swiftly overrun and Cavour called parliament into session in order to ratify the recent annexations. Emanuel then conquered Naples and thus took the wind out of Garibaldi's sails while also checking the designs of the republican Mazzini and the extremists. To D'Azeglio, the Italian ambassador to London, Cavour confided, "if we did for ourselves what we are doing for Italy, we should be great knaves."[101]

Meanwhile, Napoleon worried about a resurrection of the Holy Alliance. In September, Alexander let it be known that he was inviting Franz Joseph and Wilhelm to a meeting in Warsaw. Alexander may have had in mind a rather illogical combination of the old conservative Metternichean alliance and the continuance of Russia's flirtation with France.[102] Gorchakov intended to use the meeting as a means towards provoking France into offering better terms to

---

[99] Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., p. 67.
[100] Cavour to Nigra, August 28, 1860 in Carteggio Cavour-Nigra, vol. 4, no. 1079. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 120.
[101] Bolton King, History of Italian Unity, vol. 2 (London: J. Nisbet & Co., 1899), p. 153.
[102] Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., p. 556. It was illogical because support for France in order to overturn the Paris treaty abraded Austria's interests, whereas support for the Holy Alliance was necessary to halt Napoleon's revolutionary activities. Alexander hoped to achieve both goals, but ended up achieving neither of them.

Russia on the Eastern Question.[103] The gambit appeared to work and Napoleon was thus forced to bid higher for Russian assistance. The French emperor's whole Italian policy would be viewed as a failure at home should Sardinia be deprived of Lombardy while France lost possession of Savoy and Nice. Prussian intervention and/or an Austrian attack on Sardinia might precipitate this outcome. Thus, Napoleon interfered by tempting Alexander with a new expectation of revision in the Near East should some unspecified catastrophe take place. France would settle with Russia before any of the other powers, thus allowing the tsar the opportunity to recover Bessarabia. Moreover, Thouvenal planned to exclude Austria from Romania, and Britain from both Egypt and the Dardanelles, respectively. In return, Russia was to support a new French-inspired four-point plan in Italy. First, France promised to refrain from offering assistance to Piedmont should it attack Venetia. Second, Austria could not recover Lombardy even if she was victorious in a new war. In turn, France promised to support the federation called for in the Villafranca and Zurich treaties as a sop to Austria. Third, a peace conference would realistically assess the prospects for the deposed rulers to be returned to power in central Italy (in other words, highly unlikely). Finally, the dispositions of both Nice and Savoy

[103] Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., p. 556.

would not be contested.[104] Again, this proposal did not confer any immediate benefits to Russia, nor did it require any sacrifice on the part of Russia.

Thus, when the three monarchs met at Warsaw from October 25-27, 1860, Prussia and Austria expected a conservative crusade against Italy, but Wilhelm and Franz Joseph were left disappointed. Both monarchs were expected to remain neutral unless Sardinia attacked Venetia, this stipulation being fully consistent with Napoleon's offers to Alexander. Schleinitz acted as an intermediary for Gorchakov when the former requested of Russell that Britain abandon the Black Sea clauses in order to mollify Russia. This request was met with a stiff refusal. Thus, since Prussia refused to contravene Britain because it anticipated the latter's assistance later in acquiring Schleswig-Holstein for itself,[105] and Austria refused to give way on the Black Sea clauses (it was the originator of these terms), this new Franco-Russian scheme had little chance of bearing fruit. As Cook notes, "though the Warsaw meeting failed to achieve anything conclusive in terms of bringing about a definitive settlement of the Italian problem, it did not shore up the Russo-French entente as Gorchakov had hoped. Since Russia had failed to win Austrian support for the French proposals on Italy, Napoleon apparently hoped that his promises on the Eastern Question

---

[104] Memorandum communicated by Alexander to Franz Joseph, Haus-Hof-and Staatsarchiv, X/49, October 23, 1860. Cited in Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., p. 557.
[105] Valsecchi, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Gilbert, ed., op. cit., pp. 65-66.

would be quietly forgotten. For some time, therefore, Russo-French relations remained rather cool."[106]

On October 26, 1861 Garibaldi greeted Emanuel with the words "Hail to the King of Italy" and Italy was informally unified. Both Russia and Spain protested Emanuel's breach of international law by recalling their ministers from Turin. Prussia refused to join in this futile gesture. Nevertheless, Alexander and Wilhelm restrained Franz Joseph from provoking a war in Venetia. Napoleon voiced outrage at Cavour but it was a pretense. Russell could not believe that Austria refused to give way to Russia regarding the Black Sea clauses given the former's dire situation in Italy. Since Britain had no intention of renouncing those clauses as well, Russell preempted that possibility by famously publicly declaring his support for the revolution in Italy on October 27. Cavour's unscrupulous behavior was thus given a moral sanction by Britain.[107] The following March 1861, with the exception of Venetia and Rome, a national parliament was called to formalize the unification of Italy. Shortly thereafter Cavour died, unable to bear witness to the fruits of his labor. Italy would not truly be unified until the Austrians were driven from Venetia (1866) and Rome was occupied (1870).

Conclusion: the dynamics of mutual aggressive affective abandonment.

New information regarding both the value of the outcome of a limited war in Italy, or of a general war in Europe, respectively, as the consequence of

---

[106] Cook, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," op. cit., p. 558.

opportunistic aggression on the parts of France, Sardinia, and Austria would explain preference reversals on the parts of all the combatant and non-combatant powers from an expected utility perspective. So would new information regarding the probabilities of both those outcomes occurring. Napoleon initially convinced himself that a limited war in Italy and recovery of France's 'natural frontiers' would be a stepping-stone to overturning the Vienna treaty without the necessity of a general war. Walewski's conservative opinion to the contrary might be regarded as new information, but the emperor clearly had a motivated bias to precipitate the war in Italy and he repeatedly gave little credence to his foreign minister's opinions. Moreover, the fact that Napoleon circumvented his own diplomats in order to petition Alexander to jointly engage in a revisionist adventure indicates that he was little susceptible to rational argument. Only late when revolutionary activity appeared to be uncontrollable as the consequence of war did Napoleon recognize the potential for contagion in the Near East and a consequent outbreak of general war. Still, despite recognition of this very real possibility, the emperor continued to prosecute the war and was little interested in a Russian offer to mediate peace after his battlefield successes. On the Russian side, Kiselev played a similar role as did Walewski regarding his conservative advice to Alexander. For their parts, Palmerston, Victoria, Kiselev, and the Ballplatz, separately, expressed concern at the potential for the outbreak of general war should the war in Italy fail to stay limited and thus take a

---

[107] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 408-13.

revolutionary turn. From the status quo powers one would expect increased deterrent threats of intervention should the combatant powers not come to terms with each other. In turn, the combatant powers should quit the war because they feared outside intervention by the status quo powers and the possibilities, either that they would be dispossessed of their battlefield gains, or of the war becoming general. None of this occurred despite diplomatic evidence of perceptions that such dynamics could easily occur.

True, France and Austria reversed preferences and tried to come to terms with each other, but they only did so because of disappointment at the assistance that they had heretofore expected from third parties. That France and Austria were largely not worried about adverse intervention from outside parties is reflected by their eagerness to revert to their original aggressive motivations and to continue to prosecute the Italian war. Thus, the increased risks to general war as a consequence of increased risks to intervention by outside parties was simply not evident. Finally, the war might have been avoided had Austria let the peace conference do its work by gaining small concessions from the former while holding Italian demands for independence and unity at bay. Thus, the status quo did not materially change from the pre-war posturings on the parts of France, Sardinia, and Austria until all three conspired to wreck the peace conference and precipitate the war.

A prospect approach provides a better explanation for the dynamics of this war than does expected utility. Russia was clearly trying to renormalize for

its losses in Bessarabia and on the Black Sea as a consequence of losing the Crimean War. But Alexander was unwilling to precipitate a general war in order to effect those desired revisions. Gorchakov's foreign policy preferences won out over the initially more conservative preferences of Kiselev. Kiselev reversed preference and lobbied for backing France to the hilt when hostilities began. His preference reversal was not the result of new information; rather it was the shock of war itself that revealed his anticipated negative regret at failing to back France. In contrast, Gorchakov stayed the course in offering Napoleon no more than benevolent neutrality. His motivated bias to overturn the Paris treaty led him to give short shrift to the problem of a revolutionary conflagration should the war fail to stay limited. Gorchakov's attitude toward international politics was a decided switch from the status quo supporting diplomacy of the Holy Alliance that broke down at the conclusion of the Crimean War. Gorchakov believed that there was no necessary relation between revolutionary ferment, which he believed to be a passive force that needed to be manipulated, and the outbreak of general war. Thus, it was easy for him to believe that the Italian war could stay limited as long as the major powers desired it to stay so.[108] Gorchakov's opinion was a decided departure from the essentially conservative views held both by liberal and authoritarian states at the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars concerning the relationship between international war and domestic revolution. Thus, it could be argued that Gorchakov's motivated bias to abet war in Italy for

[108] Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign

what it might produce in the Near East led him to adopt an irrationally consistent view of the relationship between international war and domestic revolution. Moreover, the foreign minister evinced little interest in breaking the diplomatic logjam at the conclusion of the war by stating that: "Russia has no direct interest in the affairs of Italy, and with the conditions prevailing today, the collective authority of Europe runs the risk of playing a sad role. The directly interested parties have reached an impasse and are counting on us to break it…We have no desire…to pull chestnuts out of the fire for others, and our good friends will be surprised at the passive role they will see us playing."[109] This attitude is both cynical and indicative of his risk acceptance for gain considering that the Italian war could not have been precipitated without Russian connivance.

Napoleon, in turn, allowed domestic politics to drive his preference for conducting war in Italy. He did not think through the implications of Italian unity for it created another significant power and potential adversary with whom he would have to contend. Although the Roman commitment was an embarrassment, Napoleon's attempt to rid himself of it by fobbing it off on the European community after provoking a war brought much opprobrium in France with the clerics upon whom much of his domestic support depended. The

---

Policy," op. cit., p. 135.

[109] Gorchakov correspondence, Württembergisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Stuttgart, G 2-8, Hausarchiv, Abteilung cccxiv, Büschel no. 7, December 4, 1859. Cited in Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," op. cit., p. 143.

anti-clerics pilloried him for overextending himself in Italy for personal prestige. Thus, Napoleon was forced to continue the war in order to collect scraps of the 'natural frontier' in Nice and Savoy. The victory was hollow because this risk acceptance for gain earned him the distrust of the rest of Europe, in particular from Prussia and Britain.

Austria suffered from the most severe motivated biases to punish Italian revolutionary activity. Through Buol's diplomatic blundering, Franz Joseph threw away any residual goodwill for Austria on the parts of Britain and Prussia by continuing to believe that it could act with impunity towards Sardinia regardless of whether it remained restrained or not. Moreover, the Ballplatz was in high dudgeon over interference by outside powers regarding its territorial affairs and it never believed until too late both that Sardinia would not be held back by France and that Prussia and Britain would fail to support her. Franz Joseph fundamentally did not understand the Prussian demand for equality in Germany and thus foolishly believed that Prussian assistance could be had for nothing.

To varying degrees, then, Alexander, Napoleon, and Franz Joseph preferred to use the insurance premium in risky fashion in order either to regain what they had previously lost or to keep from losing any endowments. Essentially, the latter two sovereigns converted the insurance premium to the risky use of a lottery ticket. Alexander was the least risk acceptant of the three. Although he deplored the terms of the Paris treaty and was willing to give

Gorchakov leeway to conclude revisionist agreements with France, Alexander nevertheless could not countenance the outbreak of general war in order to effect a revision of the Black Sea clauses. The French emperor could be considered more risk acceptant for gain insofar as he solicited Alexander to abet his Italian war. In Taylor's view, Napoleon was a procrastinating adventurer;[110] his search to restore French prestige that was largely personal in origin pushed him into revisionist schemes even as he intermittently drew back because he recognized that the situation could get out of control. He also had a poorly thought out plan regarding the desirability of Italian unification and was looking to relieve himself of this adventure towards the end of the war in order to concentrate on more promising imperialistic adventures in Syria, China, and Mexico, respectively.[111] As demonstrated, Franz Joseph briefly thought of using the insurance premium in conservative fashion in order to retain what was left of his position in Italy. But this was only after he blundered by giving Buol license to refuse to admit Sardinia to the peace conference and then vainly attempt to humiliate Sardinia by attacking it, thus precipitating a revolution that eluded official control. This stubborn combination of risk acceptance for loss as well as risk acceptance for gain left Austria repeatedly isolated in Europe. Cavour was obviously risk acceptant for gain and thus hoped to be rewarded by playing a long-shot winning lottery ticket. This is understandable. Since Italy was so disunited, it is

---

[110] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 115.
[111] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., pp. 210-23; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 407.

hard to argue that it was renormalizing for loss. Thus, this risk acceptance is essentially the result of having nothing to lose.

Prussia, for its part, had a motivated bias to appease the British for future help that it could provide. In turn, Russia could not understand why Prussia would not press Britain harder for a renunciation of the Paris treaty. Both Prussia and Austria could not understand why Russia did not take a stronger line against Italian unity through a revival of the Holy Alliance. Motivated bias on the parts of the major decision-makers reinforced systemic imbalance; Russia would not break with France while Prussia would not ally with Austria without being properly compensated. While these two preferences were independent of each other, both were necessary in order for the war to occur. Britain was significant largely due to its failure to aid in punishing unprovoked aggression, on the one hand, and due to its imprimatur of the Italian revolution after the fact, on the other hand. Thus, Italy could steal a march on the rest of Europe.

Chapter 5: Asymmetric affective abandonment: Bismarck's wars of unification: The Second Polish Uprising and the Danish War over the Elbe Duchies.

Prussian minister-president Otto von Bismarck was the architect of three wars fought seriatim against Denmark (1864), Austria (1866), and France (1870) that resulted in the unification of Germany and the founding of the Second Reich. A brilliant diplomat and statesman, Bismarck neutralized all potential powers that might have thwarted his efforts and was able to fight and defeat an isolated opponent with repeated declarations that he was merely upholding the status quo. In the 1850s Prussia was the fifth-rate European great power, humiliated by Austria at Olmütz[1]; in twenty short years it became the predominant European power.

During this period, the European system was severely structurally imbalanced. Given the hindsight of two World Wars in which Germany was designated the aggressor, it is hard to remember that Britain continued to view

---

[1] In 1850, German civil war was averted under pressure by Tsar Nicholas to force Prussia to back down and to revert to the status quo German Confederation established by the Vienna Treaties. Prussia attempted to divide Germany by establishing the Erfurt Union comprised of itself, Baden, and the lesser German states of northern and central Germany. Austria, in turn, supported by the kings of Bavaria, Würtemburg, Saxony, and Hanover, demanded a restoration of the Confederation. The flashpoint for the crisis was a request by the Danish king for Austria to enter Holstein (one of the Elbe Duchies) and to put down a rebellion (the act of restoration termed federal execution). Prussia stood aloof. Holstein was a member of the German Confederation, but Austrian interference in Prussia's sphere of interest brought Prussian and Austrian troops into contact with one another. Prussia had the military strength but lacked the political will to face down Austria. The same grouping of states would later form rival camps in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 with a different result as Prussia would then have both the military strength and political will to prevail over Austria. See, Werner E. Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 32, fn. 1.

France during the nineteenth century as the prime disturber of the peace[2] and that it largely welcomed German unification as providing a potentially liberal counter to the avowedly revisionist ambitions of both France and Russia.[3] France and Britain fell out with each other completely, first, as the consequence of the British failure to support the French on behalf of the Poles during the Second Uprising (1863), and second, as the consequence of the French failure to support the British on behalf of the Danes regarding the disposition of the Elbe Duchies (Schleswig and Holstein) (1864).[4] In turn, Austria and Prussia were given a free hand against Denmark because of Russia's benevolent neutrality. This was payment for Prussia's neutrality during the Polish uprising that Russia brutally suppressed. (Bismarck was able to keep Russia effectively at bay with well-timed, thinly-veiled, threats to incite German Poles to revolution.[5]) Additionally, the domestic politics of economic prosperity as the consequence of free-trade and

---

[2] Richard Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 5.

[3] Robert W. Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), pp. 473-74. In the vanguard of this feeling, which included Queen Victoria and her German-born consort Prince Albert, as well as the South German liberals, was the Germanophile British diplomat Robert Morier. See, in particular, Scott W. Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier (Wesport, CN: Praeger, 2000), Chapter 4: "Nationality and the German Question."

[4] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 164, 209.

[5] Otto von Bismarck, Friedrich Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 6b (Paderbron, GE: Schöningh Verlag, [1924-35] 2004), p. 515, Bismarck letter to Goltz, Prussian ambassador to France, July 31, 1866. Cited in A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 175.

empire predisposed successive governments to policies of strict non-intervention on the Continent when British interests were not believed to be at stake. Both Tory and Whig governments alike developed motivated biases to abstain from intervention to the point that Victoria believed that Britain had abrogated its status and influence as a great power to be reckoned with in European politics. Thus, during Prussia's wars of unification, both Britain and Russia largely absented themselves from intervening effectively on the Continent. It was left to France's Napoleon III to prevent Prussian success and in this he was not up to the task.[6]

The Austro-Prussian War of 1866 was precipitated by Bismarck's motivated bias to dissolve the German Confederation in which Austria held hegemonic leadership and refused to accord Prussia equality. Austria stubbornly refused to make timely concessions, despite the fact that Prussia was the rising power in Europe on all relevant indicators, notably demographic, economic, and military-political power while Austria was increasingly becoming the 'sick man of Europe'. Thus, Prussia found Austria technically in violation of the Treaty of Gastein, which specified the terms of Prusso-Austrian occupation of the Duchies, and forced war on its partner. Napoleon, for his part, had motivated biases to achieve some foreign policy victory in order to shore up his declining domestic political power and thus offered separate deals of benevolent neutrality to both

[6] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, ibid., pp. 156-57.

Prussia and Austria, hoping to collect with the winner. Austria returned France this favor by failing to come to its aid during the Franco-Prussian War.

This sequence of events just described can be considered as a piece for theoretical consideration. In its purest form an aggressive power has motivated biases to engage in revisionist behavior while the victim states are overdeterred by such aggressive posturing and the latter eventually break out of their predicament by precipitating war because they are unable to find defensive allies.[7] The other great powers, in turn, play the role of tertius gaudens (the watchful (laughing) third), largely expecting to be rewarded by the true aggressor for their benevolent neutrality later only to be disappointed. Motivated biases are developed by such third parties in order to avoid the reality that they, too, have been overdeterred. Thus, this examination can be considered a crucial case study in demonstrating the explanatory validity of affective abandonment as a phenomenon in international relations when the system is significantly structurally imbalanced.

Historical, as well as political science, treatments of Bismarck's wars regard these crucial events over time as of a piece. Seton-Watson argues that "the events of 1866 and 1867…represent the high-water mark of British non-intervention: from this point of view 1870-1 was a mere sequel, as our attitude then had virtually been predetermined by our attitude in 1866. In a word, our non-intervention was most marked at the very moment when effective

---

[7] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, ibid., p. 166.

intervention would have had the most decisive results."[8] Gall's magisterial and largely sympathetic study of Bismarck concludes that "the year 1866 does in fact represent a crucial turning–point in the history of central Europe, much more so than the actual founding of the Reich in 1870-1, which in many respects merely translated into reality what had been laid out four years before…Abrupt though the caesura was, however, in reality it represented simply the breaking through of very much deeper, long-term trends of development, the opening of the curtain, as it were, on a set that had been in place for a long time."[9] Finally, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman argue that, "during the months remaining in 1866 after the war ended and through 1867, a sequence of events unleashed forces that shaped the course of European history up to and beyond the outbreak of World War I. These forces were all clearly visible and given intelligible shape well before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, itself made possible by the events of 1866."[10]

In a sense, this analysis lacks the dynamism of the two previous case studies regarding affective abandonment. The Crimean War was fought quite reluctantly by Britain and Russia, while the Austro-Italian War was fought quite ardently by the antagonists. In the case at hand, it is necessary to consider the degree to which Bismarck neutralized prospective powers that were already

---

[8] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 485.
[9] Lothar Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, volume 1, 1851-1871 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), p. 313.
[10] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 238.

predisposed to maintain neutrality for domestic purposes.[11] It will not do, as some have argued, that Bismarck was merely responding to opportunities presented by the inability of the other major European powers to concert their efforts to thwart his ambitions.[12] Nor will it do to argue that Bismarck plotted the

---

[11] Goddard argues that the manner in which Prussia was able to legitimize its expansion toward the other major European powers is key to explaining the puzzle as to why it was largely unopposed. The argument is quite persuasive but it gives short shrift to the degree to which the major powers were both antipathetic toward working with one another to prevent this expansion as well as the degree to which motivated biases stemming from domestic sources prevented significant diplomatic and military action. See, Stacie E. Goddard, "When Right Makes Might: How Prussia Overturned the European Balance of Power," International Security, vol. 33, no. 3 (Winter 2008/09), pp. 110-142.

[12] See, for instance, Halperin's criticism of Kolb's argument that neither war nor provocation was Bismarck's aim that set off the Franco-Prussian War. Halperin regards Kolb's work a piece of "special pleading… despite the author's protestations of objectivity and scientism" (S. William Halperin, "The Origins of the Franco-Prussian War Revisited: Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne," Journal of Modern History, vol. 45, no. 1 (March, 1973), p. 88; Eberhard Kolb, Der Kreigsausbruch 1870: Politische Entscheidungsprozesse und Verantwortlichkeiten in der Julikrise 1870 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), p. 150)). Of German unification, Bismarck famously stated, "one could put the clock forward, but time will go no faster for that, and the ability to wait while circumstances unfold is a prerequisite of practical politics" (Bismarck, Die gesamme Werke, vol. 6b, op. cit., p. 3.) This insight Gall puts to good use in the nuanced appreciation of his subject. For example, it is usually thought that the initiator of an action has the advantage of surprise, but Bismarck thought quite differently. According to Gall,

> "contrary to Bismarck's own statements, …his watchword had to be not patience but action. It is not inconsistent with this that for long periods he preferred to act reactively, that is to say to build his own actions on those of others. Knowing as he did that he had to move, the obvious course was to make the crucial moves apparently from the defensive in order not to let his opponent have the advantage of marking time in a rest position. That the attacker in fact must formally be the defender had been one of Bismarck's political axioms from the beginning" (Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 333).

unification of Germany at the outset in pure defiance of external influences.[13] The German statesman was given to braggadocio after the fact; thus, we cannot necessarily take his remembrances as true reflections of his attitude toward risk-taking at the time of occurrence.[14] Moreover, Bismarck made many statements that were contradictory in the whole, but individually made for specific purposes to particular audiences.[15] Not only did he have to convince the rest of Europe of his professed attachment to evolutionary political change regarding the unification of Germany, but he also had to convince the lesser German states south of the River Main even as he was conducting a monarchical 'revolution from above'.[16] To wit, if Prussian aggression scared the British on the one hand, Bismarck's subsequent proposal to press for universal male suffrage in Germany, on the other hand, intrigued as it scared them even more. British liberalism

---

[13] J.M. Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). Wawro argues that both Bismarck and Napoleon went to war for almost purely domestic reasons in their respective states. See, Geoffrey Wawro, The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 16-40. Wetzel refutes this arguing that the Bismarck conducted war in order to prevail in the European balance of power. See, David Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), p. 72.

[14] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 72, 103; Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 279, 362.

[15] Gordon A. Craig, Germany: 1866-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 14.

[16] A the end of 1866, the historian Heinrich von Treitschke wrote, "our revolution is being completed, as it was begun, from above, and with the limited understanding of subjects we are groping in the dark" (M. Cornicelius, ed. Heinrich von Treitschkes Briefe, vol. 3, part 2, (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 1920), p. 103, fn. 1, letter to G. Reimer, December 1, 1866). Cited in Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 313.

meant the propertied right to vote, not the specter of socialism (also referred to as republicanism at the time).[17] But, Bismarck was brilliant enough to know that socialism would not obtain in Germany because ninety-percent of the populace favored king Wilhelm I. Thus, parliamentary democracy would not be threatened from below, but from above, with the help of the peasantry.[18]

As indicated above, it is impossible to understand the ease with which German unification largely proceeded without understanding the falling out between France and Britain. The rupture between these two states was not abrupt; Britain had been losing interest in Continental politics ever since the debacle of the Crimean War. British disinterest in Europe was not one of kind, but rather of degree, itself waxing and waning more or less depending upon the proclivities of the various prime ministers in power at the time, but certainly declining.[19] Palmerston was the last nineteenth-century interventionist British statesman and he favored a close liberal alliance with France if for no other reason than he believed that Britain could not influence politics on the Continent without an ally. Still, Palmerston distrusted Napoleon, particularly regarding the emperor's revisionist intentions over Belgium later revealed to be well founded. The French annexations of Nice and Savoy during the Austro-Italian War of 1859

---

[17] Agatha Ramm, review of Gall, Bismarck, der weisse Revolutionair (Frankfurt: Propyläen Verlag, 1980) in English Historical Review, vol. 96, no. 381 (October 1981), p. 882.
[18] Herman von Petersdorff et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vol. 1 (Berlin: Otto Stolberg, 1923-33), pp. 60-61. Cited in Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 287.
[19] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 5.

and Britain's refusal to second a Napoleon inspired congress in 1863 over Poland made a close understanding with France over the Danish Question near impossible.[20] Moreover, Palmerston died in 1865, thus removing one of the last effective voices in foreign affairs with respect to Europe during the period under examination (Clarendon was the other). The Tories, Derby, Stanley, and later, Disraeli, promoted strict non-intervention to the point that Millman chronicles this period as 'the fall from the pinnacle'.[21] Thus, the events of the Second Polish Uprising and the Danish War over the Duchies will be analyzed in this chapter to show how Britain and France became estranged as Britain developed closer ties to Prussia based on presumed common liberal precepts, that reflected more wishful thinking than reality. The remaining two empirical chapters will then be devoted to the diplomatic history of the outbreaks of the Austro-Prussian, and the Franco-Prussian, Wars, respectively, with particular emphasis on the attitudes toward risk-taking on the parts of the leaders and foreign ministers of the major European powers. Prospect analysis is particularly suited to this examination. Certain themes spring to mind here. First, much of Europe did Bismarck's work for him inasmuch as the lack of a stabilizing influence in the form of a Franco-British alignment to counter aggression with military power left a power vacuum in Europe to which Bismarck was only too willing to fill. Napoleon tried to piggyback on Bismarck's successes only to be rebuffed and

---

[20] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
[21] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 1 –26.

thus turned to reestablishing the status quo when it could no longer be reclaimed. Second, Bismarck's protestations nothwithstanding, Prussia and the kleindeutsch solution that he effected by kicking Austria out of Germany, enabled the minister-president to frame the new status quo as continuous advancement and thus the replacement of French hegemony in Europe with that of German. The Franco-Prussian War was instigated by Bismarck's baiting the severely wounded amour-propre of an insecure and physically debilitated French emperor whose empire was already at the end of its tether.

The Second Polish Uprising (1863).

Taking its cue from the successful 1859 Italian War of Unification, a second Polish uprising[22] occurred that is significant here because it was the point of departure for Bismarck's early success in developing a constellation of international alignments that allowed him to subsequently isolate his opponents on the way to German unification.[23] Rival patriot groups receiving support from expatriates living in Paris precipitated the revolt in Warsaw. Tsar Alexander II tried to quell the revolt and restore limited autonomy to Poland. His appointment of the grand duke Constantine as governor-general was seen as a

[22] The first uprising dates to 1830-31, in which Russia destroyed the Polish Constitution enacted as part of the Vienna Treaty of 1815. 'Congress Poland' was the tributary rump of a kingdom bound in perpetuity to the Russian imperial dynasty. See, Alan Palmer, Bismarck (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), p. 82.

[23] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 110.

concession, but it backfired.[24] The conservative occupying powers of Russia, Prussia, and Austria initially coalesced to suppress the revolt which is consistent with essential risk acceptance for loss. On February 8, 1863, the Alvensleben Convention was signed between Prussia and Russia that codified joint efforts to disarm Polish insurgents along the common frontier.

Both France and Britain were alarmed and angry that Prussia would concert with Poland's oppressor. Feeling for Polish independence was traditionally high in Paris owing both to Catholicism and Napoleon's penchant for supporting nationalist movements, less so in Protestant London, but nevertheless sympathetic.[25] Initially, Palmerston, then prime minister, believed that the revolt would be crushed, had little inclination to interfere, but expected Napoleon to take the initiative. At the beginning of February, public opinion in France forced Napoleon to act by pressing conciliation on St. Petersburg, but the emperor also wanted to present a joint declaration by France, Britain, and Austria in order to force Prussia to abandon the Alvensleben Convention.[26] Cowley, the British ambassador to France warned Russell, the British foreign secretary,

---

[24] The insurgents saw through a conscription order that had the intention of carrying off Polish revolutionary youth to Siberia or the Caucasus. See, Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 432.
[25] France had relations with Poland dating to the sixteenth century, failed to obstruct its partition in the eighteenth century, and failed to thwart the Russian suppression of 1830-31 with a consequent loss of liberties there. See, Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., pp. 257-58.
[26] Kenneth Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 105.

> "the feeling in this country is warming again in favor of the Poles. The emperor has taken up their cause… The public press too, particularly the papers which are supposed to be under Government influence, have not been very mild lately towards Prussia and there has been for the last two days considerable agitation in the political and monied world. Prussia will do well not to go too far, for although I am sure that at this moment war is not in the emperor's thoughts, there is no saying how soon a warlike feeling with respect to Poland may not be raised, and Prussia would be the first to bear the brunt of it."[27]

News of this possible combination left Prussia isolated, much to the satisfaction of the tsar: "our dear Bismarck is a terrible blunderer."[28] The German Diet was none too pleased at Bismarck's having signed the Alvensleben Convention and Bismarck, whom Wilhelm appointed minister-president in 1862, offered his resignation, but the king preferred to allow his diplomat to extricate himself from his precipitate policy. Bismarck overreacted to the Polish uprising stationing four army corps around Posen and in western Prussia. In reality, Alexander did not need Prussian help to quell the revolt and Gorchakov, the Russian vice chancellor, resented Bismarck's interference. But the tsar did not want to insult Wilhelm, his uncle, and thus allowed Bismarck to work himself out of the jam.[29] First, the German told Buchanan, the British ambassador to

---

[27] Private letter of Cowley to Russell, February 20, 1863, Foreign Office 519/230 draft. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 111.
[28] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 115.
[29] Palmer, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 83.

Prussia, that the Convention was not likely to come into force.[30] Then, he informed Oubril, the Russian ambassador, that Prussia would stand by the Convention if assured of Russian support. But would Russia come to Prussia's aid if need be? In the margin of Oubril's report Alexander penned, "aid for a war against France and England: no thanks."[31] Thus, Gorchakov replied to Bismarck that, "since Prussia judges it in her interest to renounce the arrangement, the emperor will not oppose."[32]

Contemporaneously, Russell, in the House of Lords, criticized the conscription order in Poland as "a measure which no British Minister could venture to justify" and that he had informed the Russian government that he believed "it was the most impudent and unjust step it could take."[33] Palmerston followed in the House of Commons a week later stating that the British government had "always held that the conduct of Russia towards Poland had been a violation of the stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna."[34]

But Palmerston and Russell were not necessarily of a mind and neither were France and Britain. Earlier, Russell had become favorably disposed towards the French approach whereas Palmerston felt that diplomacy should be directed

---

[30] Buchanan telegram to Russell, February 26, 1864, cited in Robert H. Lord, "Bismarck and Russia in 1863," American Historical Review, vol. 29, no. 1 (October 1923), p. 34.
[31] Oubril letter to Gorchakov, February 17, 1863, cited in Lord, "Bismarck and Russia in 1863," ibid., p. 35.
[32] Gorchakov telegram to Oubril, February 27, 1863, cited in Lord, "Bismarck and Russia in 1863," ibid., p. 34.
[33] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, vol. clixix, pp. 560-68.
[34] Hansard, ibid., vol. clixix, p. 934.

towards Russia, the real culprit.[35] Moreover, Napoleon had conflicting opinions here insofar as he wanted to maintain the cordial relations with Russia formed at the conclusion of the Crimean War in order to relieve his dependence on Britain, but also to support nationalist movements whenever possible.[36] Moreover, he intended to drive a wedge between Prussia and Russia.[37] Doing nothing was not an option as pressure from factions within the court and in Paris at large placed the emperor in a predicament. Drouyn de Lhuys, his Prussophobe foreign minister, offered a way out of this quandry by arguing that France should take up against Prussia and not against Russia.[38] Additionally, Napoleon did not want to base Polish rights on the Vienna Treaty, which he longed to overturn, but which Britain believed to continue to be in force.[39]

Opinion regarding the Polish affair in Britain was curious but revelatory. The Times argued that "whatever may be our hostility to the bear, there is no doubt of our feeling towards the jackal."[40] Kennedy observes that this feeling did not presage a change in the otherwise cordial relations between Britain and Germany, but indignation that Prussia's actions would give Napoleon an excuse

---

[35] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 105.
[36] Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 195.
[37] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 258.
[38] Palmer, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 83.
[39] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 433.
[40] K.S. Pasieka, "The British press and the Polish insurrection of 1863," Slavonic and East European Review, vol. 42, no. 98 (December 1963), pp. 17-18.

to move on the Rhine.[41] Granville's account of Victoria's concern gives further evidence: "The Queen is terribly alarmed at the French language and proposals respecting Poland, and thinks we must on no account let ourselves be dragged into what may be a war with Germany! The Queen shudders at the very thought of what if we are not very careful, and very guarded in our expectations of France, we may find ourselves plunged into! The proposals of France would inevitably bring us into collision with Prussia—and we should have a French army on the Rhine before we could turn round."[42]

Palmerston suspected a French trap too and he refused to cooperate in the joint note to Prussia.[43] Austria cooled to any joint action against Prussia as any Polish insurgency in Austrian-held Galicia was problematic. Gorchakov reported

---

[41] Paul M. Kennedy, The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914 (London: Ashfield Press, 1980), p. 10. Kennedy argues that Anglo-German antagonism did not come to the fore until the latter threatened to develop a navy that would compete worldwide in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Otherwise, there were many points of commonality between both states. Connections between royal families, cultural interactions, shared bonds of religion and race complemented rising economic prosperity and mutual admiration for political structures. British enthusiasm for Greek and Italian unity largely extended toward the German quest and saw a path through liberalism. There were reservations, but they seemed manageable, in particular, the rise of the Zollverein and the possibility of increased tariffs. But German industrialization and the creation of a common German market was seen to potentially benefit Britain economically. See, Kennedy, The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914, ibid., pp. 3-8; John Mander, Our German Cousins: Anglo-German Relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries (London: John Murray, 1974), pp. 173-95.

[42] Victoria to Granville, February 23, 1863, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 54/50. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 113.

[43] The real British concern was French annexation of Belgium, not the upper Rhine. See, E. Ann Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 30.

to Napier, the British ambassador to Russia, on March 7, that the Convention had not been ratified and thus was a dead letter.[44] Bismarck assured Buchanan that no practical effect had been given to the Convention.[45] Thus, Russell was able to report to the Queen that, "…the question of the Convention of Prussia and Russia may be considered as set at rest by the despatches from Berlin."[46] Napoleon was clearly risk acceptant for gain here. Public opinion, which was being cultivated by the government, would have been satisfied at this point with remonstrating Russia. It was not necessary to humiliate Prussia. But Cowley reported to Russell that the emperor and his ministers were "bitterly disappointed at your declining the combined note."[47] Drouyn described the Convention as "an incident of which we should have taken advantage."[48]

Having been rebuffed by Britain and Austria in condemning Prussia, Napoleon took a more dangerous turn against the latter by offering Franz Joseph an offensive alliance. The more fantastical ideas for French revision may be

---

[44] Napier letter to Russell, March 3, 1863, no. 121, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 91/50. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 116.
[45] Buchanan telegram to Russell, March 4, 1863, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 96/50. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 116.
[46] Russell letter to Victoria, March 9, 1863, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 103/50. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 116.
[47] Cowley letter to Russell, March 1, 1863, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 84/50. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 117.
[48] Grey, personal secretary to Victoria, letter to Russell, March 12, 1863, no. 19, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 88/50. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 117.

discounted including those of prince Napoleon (Plon Plon) and the empress Eugénie. But, Napoleon stated to Drouyn that he was "ready to bind himself with body and soul" to Franz Joseph and quite awkwardly stated that "hitherto he had only had mistresses, but now wanted a wife!"[49] Thus, Metternich, the Austrian ambassador to France, was dispatched to Vienna to sound out a plan for substantial revision of Europe—a reunited Poland under an Austrian archduke, cession of Venetia to Italy, Silesia and Serbia to Austria, the Rhineland to France, Saxony and Hanover to Prussia, and a partition of Turkey to the Balkan States. Franz Joseph politely turned down Napoleon; secretly he was happy to see friction continue between France and Russia.[50] But Rechberg, the Austrian foreign minister, discerned the kernel of the problem stating that "the risk was certain and the advantages problematic."[51]

Similarly driven by public opinion, Russell urged St. Petersburg to give immediate amnesty to the rebels and to restore the Kingdom of Poland. As Bourne notes, Britain did not intend to drive a wedge between the Franco-Russian alignment, nor to divert Russian attention from the Balkans, nor to snub the French emperor, but these were the unexpected consequences of its decision to intervene.[52]

---

[49] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 434.
[50] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 433-34.
[51] Richard B. Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," Central European History, vol. 4 (1971), p. 154.
[52] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., pp. 105-06.

An invitation by Russell to the signatories of the Vienna Treaty to consider the status of Poland was reluctantly agreed to by Napoleon considering the British rebuff of his earlier initiative.[53] But, Austria was less forthcoming, revealing its risk acceptance for loss. As Apponyi, the Austrian ambassador to Britain, explained, "no one could expect that Austria would embark in an enterprise which in its ultimate result might deprive her of a rich and tranquil province. She could not be an accomplice in the work of dismembering her own Dominions."[54] Thus, what resulted on April 10-12 was a very disjointed response to Russian aggression in the form of separate notes rather than one of joint solidarity. Austria's note was milquetoast, expressing concern over the revolt toward the interests of the three conservative powers. France invoked the interests of Europe, but Russell was determined to have at Russia, asking the tsar to remember his obligations under the Vienna Treaty and stating that the Polish Question was not only a source of danger to Russia, but to Europe as a whole. Although Alexander offered to pardon the rebels if they surrendered within a month, he nevertheless reminded Britain, through Gorchakov, that the Polish Constitution of 1815 was a free act of grace on the tsar's part, and thus he was not obliged to consult the other European powers regarding the disposition of

[53] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 6.
[54] Mosse, "England and the Polish Insurrection of 1863," English Historical Review, vol. 71, no. 278 (1956), p. 35.

Poland.[55] France was treated better than the other two powers as Gorchakov assured it that he would not object to a discussion of the Polish Question at a European congress provided that all other questions were discussed as well, an obvious reference to overturning the Black Sea clauses associated with the Treaty of Paris of 1856.[56]

France and Britain worked at cross-purposes. Napoleon hinted at the possibility of war with Prussia, whereas Russell was willing to remonstrate with Russia but do no more.[57] Still, Russell's criticisms of Russia became more strident from April to November and they had the unintended consequence of giving false hope to both France and Poland that Britain would support them to the point of military action. The insurgents rejected the Russian amnesty offer proclaiming that "Poland will crush the hordes of Russia," thus forcing Napier to inform Russell that "if the Government does not mean to fight, let them say so and stop the loss of life and suffering attendant on a rising which unaided cannot succeed."[58] Alexander reasserted his authority by appointing the brutal Muravyev as governor-general to crush the revolt. He also offered Wilhelm an alliance. Bismarck advised to decline the offer as the tsar had earlier refused to guarantee Prussia against a French attack. Nevertheless, Bismarck was able to

---

[55] Rachael R. Reid, in Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch, eds., Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy (1783-1919), vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), p. 462.
[56] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 137-38.
[57] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 106.
[58] Napier letter to Russell, June 17, 1863, Edward Hertslet, ed., State Papers, vol. 53, "Affairs of Poland," no. 173.

gain the pivot in which other parties needed him more than he needed them. Western reaction, rather than shrewd diplomacy, had more to do with Bismarck's success here and his later claim that his diplomacy during the Polish uprising set the course for Prusso-Russian relations for the next few years thus enabling him to lay the true foundations of the German national state is surely exaggerated regarding cause but true in effect.[59]

By June the three powers offered their advice in the form of Six Points□a general amnesty, a Polish National Assembly, an autonomous administration, freedom for the Catholic Church, use of Polish language in public life and education, and a legal recruiting system—with a suspension of hostilities and a congress composed of the Vienna signatories.[60] Drouyn asked Cowley of British intentions should Russia refuse their advice or that the congress terminate inconclusively. The Frenchman pressed for a strong statement to the effect that the three powers should "have recourse to such other measures, as they might deem advisable."[61] It was here that France openly broke with Russia; thus the entente between the two powers was at an end. Drouyn, as well as Russell and Palmerston, separately, convinced themselves that Russia was too weak to stand

---

[59] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 219.
[60] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 435.
[61] Cowley letter to Russell, June 26, 1863, no. 735, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 103/51. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 127.

up to the diplomatic pressure.[62] Still, the British demurred believing that France, as in 1853, again intended to drag it into war by playing upon its sympathies for national self-determination. Thus, Russell wanted Cowley to impress upon Drouyn that, "it would be misleading the French government if we were to allow them to suppose that in the present state of things, and in the existing state of feeling and opinion in Parliament and in the Country, Her Majesty's Government would undertake, or would find support in a war against Russia for Poland, however great the sympathy and interest may be which are felt throughout the United Kingdom in favour of the Poles."[63] Drouyn responded by stating that the emperor's regret would equal his own.[64] This was the second time during the Polish crisis that Britain had to throw cold water on French stirrings for war, first against Prussia and now against Russia.

The Russians were willing to risk isolation through a resurrection of the old Crimean coalition of France, Austria, and Britain. But this was not much of a risk as Britain clearly did not want to go to war. It was largely preoccupied with the American Civil War (tempted to side with the South but maintained neutrality in large part due to its anti-slavery stance), its navy was in decay, and it cared more for the territorial integrity of Germany at risk by a potential French

---

[62] Cowley letter to Russell, June 26, 1863, no. 735, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 103/51. Cited in Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 106.
[63] Russell letter to Cowley, July 3, 1863, no. 857, Foreign Office 1480/27. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 127.
[64] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 127.

invasion of the Rhine than it cared for Poland. Napoleon had related problems; his adventure in Mexico was the result of American distraction, but it would not go well as Maximilian, Napoleon's brother, soon to be installed as the emperor of Mexico, would eventually be captured and executed by the revolutionary government.[65] With lukewarm British and Austrian support, Napoleon knew that he could not fight on behalf of the Poles single-handedly. Thus Gorchakov dug in his heels and on July 18 refused a congress as well as amnesty for the insurgents. Russell made contradictory statements in public, arguing first that Poland "could count on our sympathies, but not on our material aid" and "neither the obligations, the honour nor the interests of England require that we should go to war for Poland…and I think it would be unbecoming to rail at Russia when we are not prepared forcibly to resist her assertions."[66] But, the foreign minister also stated that "if Russia…does not enter upon the path which is open to her by friendly counsels, she makes herself responsible for the serious consequences which the prolongation of the troubles of Poland may produce."[67]

Liberals, both in Prussia and in the lesser German states south of the River Main, were alarmed at Bismarck's aggression towards Poland.[68] Liberals were

---

[65] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 128.
[66] The Times, September 28, 1863.
[67] Russell letter to Napier, August 11, 1863, in Hertslet, ed., State Papers, vol. liii, "Affairs of Poland," no. 177.
[68] Liberalism and nationalism in Prussia and Bismarck's attitude toward this combination were beginning to take shape as early as 1862 with the reappearance of tensions in the Danish Duchies, Schleswig (partly German) and Holstein (entirely German).

also nationalists; the concept of conservative nationalism did not yet exist.[69] Thus, Franz Joseph made a phony bid for their favor by exploiting Bismarck's mistakes. Wilhelm was invited to a congress of princes to be held in Frankfurt on August 3 to consider a reform of the German Confederation that was ostensibly based on liberalization. In reality, the Austrians hoped to 'majoritize' Prussia in perpetuity, thus giving Vienna the permanent upper hand. According to Gall, "faced with the Greater German federal plans of an Austrian government that was clearly bent on liberalization at home, should they, despite the situation in Prussia, stick to their lesser German plans and support Bismarck's foreign policy in what might be a highly confusing fashion—or should they execute a decisive change of course? In fact close examination of the Austrian proposals, which fell

---

[69] James J. Sheehan, "Liberalism and Society in Germany, 1815-48," Journal of Modern History, vol. 45, no. 4 (December 1973), pp. 583-604. Kahan uses the term moderate (in contrast to classical) to characterize the brand of German liberalism, largely expostulated by the legal scholar Haym, that was devoted to the attainment of both unity and freedom. Haym eventually embraced Bismarck's policies of unification through external warfare, believing that freedom would historically follow. The National Liberal Party, of which Haym was a member, split from the Prussian Progressive Party, because the latter was too doctrinaire. Haym's liberalism was reformist and historically based, rather than revolutionary and philosophically abstract, exhibiting a preference for English, rather than French, models of constitutionalism. The liberal legal scholar Planck, believed that unity and freedom were synonymous, and thus the furtherance of one furthered the other (Alan Kahan, "The Victory of German Liberalism? Rudolf Haym, Liberalism, and Bismarck," Central European History, vol. 22, no. 1 (March, 1989), pp. 61, 65, 69-70; Hermann Oncken, Rudolf von Bennigsen, vol. 1 (Stuttgart und Leipzig: Deutsche Verlags-anstalt, 1910), p. 621). Morier shifted to a similar line of argument in the face of increasing Prussian aggression in order to retain his belief that a unified Germany would ultimately result in a liberal state. But Morier was naïve in failing to realize the inherent danger of exalting Teutonic superiority as being the best guarantee of political liberalization among Germans (Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier, op. cit., pp. 120-21).

far short of liberal expectations, made the decision a relatively easy one for them to take."[70] Princes of the lesser German states consented to the congress provided that Prussia be invited to give her consent. But Bismarck dissuaded Wilhelm from attending the congress despite the king's fear that he was insulting his fellow sovereigns. Moreover, Bismarck exposed the Austrian ruse by arguing that only a central parliament directly elected by the 'entire nation' and sharing legistlative power could counteract the dynastic particularism that plagued the lesser German states. Thus, Prussian interests were identical to those of all Germans. Such a parliament would have hived off all Germans from the non-Germans in the Habsburg Empire, precisely what the Austrians wished to avoid.[71]

When the proposal for Confederation reform fell in defeat, Bismarck did one better by asking assistance from Russia in a prospective Prusso-Austrian war. When the Russians demurred, claiming preoccupation with Poland, Bismarck intimated that he might troll for support, perhaps by offering France concessions on the Rhine. Taylor argues that Bismarck was likely not serious; he only wanted to make Russia keen to the benefit that Prussia provided as a buffer state between France and Poland. The lesson was not lost. Thereafter, Russia dropped its claim that Austria and Germany should become one and now tolerated Prussian disputes and even a later Prussian victory over Austria. While the tsar was not enamoured with Prussian aggrandizement, he did desire the

---

[70] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 230.
[71] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 197-98.

weakening of Austria in order to oppose it in the Balkans. It is too much to argue that Russia was irretrievably committed to Prussia as a result of the Polish Uprising because there was always the possibility that Russia would turn on her. But it is safe to say that this outcome was never imminent and that Prussia was able to use this relative certainty in its future strategic calculations regarding unification.[72]

Bismarck's success in raising the national question provoked Napoleon to action. By November the emperor proposed a European congress to consider the status of Poland, but also to review the 1815 settlement by offering a reconstruction of the map of Europe.[73] Austria had the most to lose because a congress would raise the question of national self-determination. Moreover, Austrian weakness took Berlin out of Napoleon's sights only to be replaced by Vienna.[74] Franz Joseph had overreached with Prussia and now drew closer to it due to French hostility. As will be analyzed shortly, this newfound, but short-lived, working relationship would manifest itself in Austro-Prussian cooperation to suppress the Danes over the disposition of the Duchies.[75] But Russell rebuffed the French emperor directly stating, "it is the conviction of H.M.'s government that the main provisions of the treaty of 1815 are in full force…and that on those foundations rests the balance of power in Europe…H.M.'s government would feel more apprehension than confidence for the meeting of a Congress of

---

[72] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 9.
[73] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 258.
[74] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 198-99.
[75] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 199.

Sovereigns and Ministers without fixed objects, ranging over the map of Europe, and exciting hopes and aspirations which they might find themselves unable either to gratify or to quiet."[76] Palmerston's earlier letter to the King of Belgium made similar points.[77] Both ministers feared both French, as well as Russian, revisionism.[78]

Napoleon was gratuitously insulted by the British in as much as the tsar was sure to thwart any efforts to convene a congress for the purpose of considering Poland. Thus the uprising vanished from international attention as Russia successfully brutally suppressed it. Queen Sophia of Holland wrote to Clarendon that Russell's reply was "deplorable…It is the death-blow of an alliance which ought to have dominated the world, managed the affairs of the Continent, assured us an era of peace."[79] She was guilty of overstatement as Britain, as well as most of Europe, distrusted the motives behind Napoleon's foreign policy adventures. Thus Britain conducted "a reconnaissance in force" which did not commit it to any ill-advised action.[80] Prussia was somewhat separated from Russia. Alexander did not blame Wilhelm from backing out of

---

[76] Herbert C.F. Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2 (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1966), p. 351.
[77] Palmerston letter to Leopold, King of Belgium, November 15, 1863, cited in Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer and the Hon. Evelyn Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1876), pp. 236-42.
[78] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 436.
[79] Sophia letter to Clarendon, January 13, 1864. Cited in Herbert Maxwell, The Life and Letters of George William Frederick, Fourth Earl of Clarendon, vol. 2 (London: Edward Arnold, 1913), p. 286.
[80] Mosse, "England and the Polish Insurrection of 1863," English Historical Review, vol. lxxi (1956), pp. 33-34.

the Alvensleben Convention under pressure from the western powers. But when Russia stated that it would continue to prosecute its actions in Poland even at the risk of war, Britain let the matter drop.[81]

Testing asymmetric affective abandonment.

Does an expected utility approach provide a reasonable explanation regarding the diplomatic and military actions of the relevant powers? Immediately it breaks down. The Polish uprising had little chance of succeeding, notwithstanding the successful example of the Italian revolution. Because of geographic importance, the conservative powers were much more concerned with Poland than they ever were with Italy.[82] Moreover, the extremist Polish insurgents drowned out the demands of their more moderate brethren. Thus, they had motivated biases, both to misunderstand initial Russian concessions as weakness and to take any diplomatic statements on the parts of France and Britain as official policy with the intention of military action to follow. In support of an expected utility explanation is the reaction of Russia. That Russia and Prussia were safe allies for each other gave the former reasonable belief in the latter's backing against western power intervention on behalf of the Poles. This is because direct military assistance from the western powers would have to

---

[81] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., pp. 106-07.

[82] An expected utility pattern of risk orientation breaks down when confronted either, with a very small (unlikely) probability of success, or, with the risk of catastrophic loss. In this case, the small probability of success should have guided the Polish insurgents, but it did not. For theory see, Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Rational choice and the framing of decisions," Journal of Business, vol. 59, no. 4, Part 2: The Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory (October 1986), pp. S251-S278.

traverse either Prussia or Austria and this was highly unlikely given that both states also occupied portions of Poland. Thus, the tsar could punish the uprising with reasonable certainty of impunity.

Even so, initial aggressive diplomatic posturing on the parts of Britain and France, respectively, in reaction to the Russian aggression might be regarded as new information that a limited, or even general, war might erupt. Thus, we see preference modifications (rather than outright reversals) on the parts of both Bismarck and Alexander. Bismarck, who was first posted as Prussian ambassador to St. Petersburg before becoming minister-president, overreached with regard to Russia, but he was not significantly punished for his initial risk acceptance for gain. Friendly dynastic ties between Prussia and Russia allowed him to recover from his precipitate policy and to allow the Alvensleben Convention to become a dead letter. Although Bismarck had a noted animated bias toward the Poles, it is unlikely given his brilliance, that this character trait drove his foreign policy in this instance.[83] Rather, the minister-president was relatively untutored in foreign policy at this early stage in his diplomatic career and he miscalculated. Alexander appeared to reverse preference and indulged the western powers by offering to give amnesty to the rebels if they quit the revolt in reasonable time. But Alexander then hewed to his initial aggressive preference after the Poles refused to back down. And Bismarck then made the tsar keen to the importance of Prussia as a conservative ally, first, by turning

[83] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 194.

down an offer of alliance, and then by forcing the Russian to reveal himself in a bogus plan to attack Austria with Russian assistance. Although Prussia and Russia mutually thwarted each other's more risk acceptant plans for gain, the diplomatic exchange was useful in that it better clarified the limits that each would go to in order to support the other. In essence, both sides were being rationally consistent in their relationship with each other.

Nevertheless, in addition to the Polish stance, the real problem with an expected utility explanation inheres in the disjointed Franco-British diplomacy. Given the trend away from intervention on the continent on the part of Parliament, coupled with Palmerston's understanding that Russia would protect its possessions, why did the prime minister not recognize that his warlike diplomatic pronouncements were so likely to provoke the belief of British support in the minds of the Poles and the French, neither of whose motives he trusted? Cowley conveyed as much with his initial report from Paris regarding Napoleon's sympathy for Poland. Moreover, Napoleon's ire was purposely misplaced, initially directed at Prussia rather than Russia. Napoleon had an interest to drive a wedge between Prussia and Russia and to keep the Franco-Russian alignment intact in order to relieve his dependence on Britain. But he aimed to do this by exploiting Prussia and Britain, two parties that were quite incidental to the Polish uprising. Napoleon's motivated bias for aggression was shortly revealed after Bismarck let drop the Alvensleben Convention, thus giving the emperor no reason to quarrel with Prussia. But Napoleon nevertheless

continued to intimate that his country might press war on Prussia. His risk acceptance for gain was also clearly revealed in his willingness to align with anyone in order to achieve a foreign policy victory, first with Britain and then with Austria. Both states turned Napoleon down because they rightly saw that he aimed to exploit them for his own purposes and that he risked provoking a general war over Poland should they support his machinations. Then, Napoleon's preference reversal to fight Russia was not well thought out considering France's geopolitical interest in remaining friendly with the latter. Finally, the emperor changed preference a third time by attempting to take advantage of Austrian weakness after the failure of Confederation reform. He threatened Austria with hostilities, thus driving the latter into the arms of Prussia, precisely the opposite of his intent. One could argue that the situation materially changed as Russia proceeded to crush the revolt and refused amnesty for the insurgents. Then it could be argued that Napoleon's preference modification to contest Russia instead of Prussia was rational. But the third preference change to threaten hostilities against Austria because of presumed weakness on the part of the latter indicates a motivated bias for opportunistic aggression rather than a careful consideration of the situation.

From Britain, Palmerston failed to restrain, and at times, abetted, the importunate diplomatic comments of Russell. When Russell realized that Britain would not intervene militarily, why did he give verbal ammunition to both the Poles and the Russians? These actions merely served to embolden both sides to

press aggression more forcefully against each other. Affective abandonment, that is, a prospect approach in combination with motivated biases, is more convincing here than expected utility. Russia refused to give up its endowments in Poland and the rest of Europe should not have been surprised. But it was. Britain and France were clearly overdeterred by Russia, but they pretended not to be. The certainty principle pointed to general war should the western powers persist in compelling Russia to desist. Britain eventually used the insurance premium in conservative fashion by conceding Poland to Russia at the risk of seeing Prussian territorial integrity impaired by a Napoleonic assault on the Rhine. It did so by finally making clear to France its preference for strict non-intervention. But Britain did so late in the game, thus allowing unnecessary Polish blood to be shed in a lost cause—lost because Palmerston knew that Britain would not intervene militarily on the continent.

Additionally, and not surprisingly, Napoleon felt betrayed by the British; he suspected a plot to separate France from Russia. It is true that Britain played its hand poorly by Russell's curt rejection of Napoleon's proposal for a congress. Moreover, as indicated above, both Palmerston and Russell, with their public comments, seemed to lead on both Napoleon and the Polish insurgents. Thus, Derby famously excoriated Russell for his incompetent handling of the Polish crisis as "meddle and muddle." Disraeli agreed, writing that "the Polish question is a diplomatic Frankenstein, created out of cadaverous remnants, by the mystic

blundering of Lord Russell."[84] But Napoleon was clearly risk acceptant for gain and he felt humiliated when all of his machinations over Poland came to naught. Both Britain and Austria sensed a motivated bias to drag Europe into war in order to gratify his redrawing the map of Europe. Thompson argues ironically that "some such redrawing of the map of Europe on nationalist lines was overdue and, if carried through, might have anticipated by peaceful means the settlement of 1918."[85] But Napoleon was a weathervane, always cocking towards opportunities for self-aggrandizement, but without the will to persist in any one plan.

Bismarck was the true beneficiary of the Polish Uprising. Mosse argues that Napoleon learned that the Franco-British entente was "a curb, not a partnership for action."[86] Nevertheless, there was misunderstanding on both sides. While Britain did not match words with actions, the emperor did not listen to soundings from Cowley through Drouyn. Both diplomats blamed Austrian inaction as the reason why a stronger stand could not be taken against the Russians.[87] Thus, this ruled out single-handed action, but it did not rule out a Franco-British démarche. This was never in the cards. Britain kept France in the fold in order to restrain it, but Napoleon merely felt emboldened to aggressive

---

[84] October 30, 1863, George Buckle and William F. Monypenny, Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, vol. 4 (London: Macmillan Co., 1910-20), p. 73.
[85] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 259.
[86] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 128.
[87] Cowley letter to Russell, July 6, 1863, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 115/51. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 128.

action. Thus, mishandling on both sides sundered the Franco-British entente in effect since the Crimean War. Napoleon also estranged Russia because he felt that the latter was taking insufficient notice of his diplomatic influence. Thus this alignment was broken. But Russia and Prussia drew closer due to Prussia's benevolent neutrality leaving Bismarck to exploit the imbalanced structure of the European system with his foray into the succession dispute over the Danish Duchies.

The Danish War over the Elbe Duchies (1864).

By the end of 1864, Prussia had the most room for maneuver in foreign affairs than any state on the continent.[88] Bismarck was able to use his success in the Elbe Duchies both to consolidate Germany north of the Main as well as to gain assent by the recalcitrant Landtag (Prussian parliament) for his illegally funded army reforms and thus draw Prussian liberals to his side.[89] This was no small feat. France and Britain, despite some posturing, had little interest in working together to aid the Danes and alternatively torpedoed plans to jointly oppose Prussian aggression. Morier, the Germanophile British diplomat, intrigued Russell with the possibility that Prussia would be a liberal bulwark against both French and Russian revisionism. Palmerston was not taken in by this argument although he had been supportive, since 1848, of any plan that might consolidate

[88] Palmer, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 100-01.
[89] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 247-68; Palmer, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 90.

Germany in order to give it more political vigor.[90] Napoleon was willing to be drawn in by Bismarck with the possibility of future compensations on the west bank of the Rhine. Russia was happy to see Prussia and Austria work together because they served as a buffer between France and Poland. Austria thought it was gaining Prussia for a conservative alliance as Bismarck appeared to take his stand in the Duchies on respect for international treaties rather than on national aspirations. This pretension also relieved Britain and Russia from taking significant action as Bismarck was merely claiming to uphold the status quo. Russia claimed to be indifferent as to whether control of the Sound passed from Denmark to Prussia as long as a Scandinavian union of Denmark and Sweden did not come to fruition.[91]

The status of the Duchies is one of the most vexing diplomatic issues of the 19th century, complicated by rival national claims of Danes, Germans, and Schleswig-Holsteiners. France, Britain, Russia and Sweden had outside claims as well. Situated between Denmark and Germany, the southern half of the Jutland peninsula contained the two territories of Schleswig and Holstein (with Lauenburg). Since the 15th century, the two Duchies were united and held as dukedoms under a personal union with the Danish crown.[92] A treaty of 1720, supported by France and Britain, guaranteed this relationship. In 1806, during

---

[90] Lord John Russell, George P. Gooch, ed., Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, 1840-1878, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green, 1925), p. 308; Frank G. Weber, "Palmerston and Prussian Liberalism, 1848," Journal of Modern History, vol. 35, no. 2 (June 1963), pp. 125-36.
[91] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 148.
[92] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 260.

the Napoleonic Wars, Christian VII of Denmark incorporated both Duchies. Under the 1815 Vienna settlement, the Duchy of Lauenburg was added to Christian's territories. The populace of both Holstein and Lauenburg being overwhelmingly German, the region had long been a member of the Holy Roman Empire. Thus, under the Vienna settlement the Danish crown was made a member of the newly constituted German Confederation due to the king's rule over Holstein.[93] In contrast, while the southern portion of Schleswig was largely German, the rest of the Duchy was Danish. Thus it was never a member of the German Confederation. The 1848 revolutions that swept Europe led to the dissolution of the union between Schleswig and Holstein, the former incorporated into Denmark, the latter remaining a member of the German Confederation.[94] The Danes attempted to annex the Duchies outright, but a strong counter-movement in Germany prevented this action.[95] In 1849 Denmark and the German Confederation fought a war with each other in which the latter was defeated, having been preoccupied with revolution itself. Parallel mediation by Britain and Russia resulted in a protocol entirely favorable to Denmark. Austria imposed a humiliating settlement on Prussia at Olmütz in 1850. Thus resistance to the Danish problem was impossible for the Prussians.[96] In 1852 the Treaty of London pledged Austria, France, Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Sweden

---

[93] Palmer, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 190.
[94] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 438.
[95] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 236-37.
[96] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 439.

to maintain the integrity of the Danish crown, although Holstein and Lauenburg continued to reserve their traditional rights and privileges.

Earlier in 1839, King Frederic VI of Denmark was succeeded by his cousin Christian VIII. Christian's son, Frederick VII, was the last male member of the House of Oldenburg, which had held the Danish crown for the last four centuries.[97] The Treaty of London also claimed to solve the succession problem by recognizing crown prince Christian of Glücksburg, a more distant cousin in the female line of succession. Moreover, the treaty specified that Denmark and the Duchies should remain under the same sovereign.[98] While Prussia assented to these terms, the Schleswig-Holsteiners disputed Christian's claim to the throne because the Duchies had always upheld Salic Law, which denied the possibility of succession through the female line. Thus, the Schleswig-Holsteiners argued that the Duchies should be ruled by the duke of Augustenburg, a direct descendant of an early 16th century ruler of Denmark, Christian III.[99]

Neither the Danes nor the Germans were happy with the London Treaty and Frederick VI began a series of encroachments on the rights of Holsteiners and enacted a policy of Danisation in Schleswig, thus fanning the flames of German nationalism.[100] The Federal Diet in Frankfurt contested the new Danish constitution of 1855 in which Holstein was to retain autonomy but Schleswig was

---

[97] Palmer, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 191.
[98] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 439.
[99] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 260.
[100] Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier, op. cit., p. 109.

to be incorporated. But the Danes had freedom for maneuver as Austro-Prussian relations were strained during the Italian War of Unification. Two years after accession as minister-president Bismarck stated it is "certain that the whole Danish question can only be solved by war in a sense favourable to us: the occasion for war can be found at any moment, when our relation to the Great Powers is one favourable for the conduct of a war."[101] If he could bring Austria over to his side, Bismarck was sure that Russia, Britain, and France would be incapable of united action on this issue. The Danes hoped for a Swedish alliance and were convinced of western support. In turn, the Federal Diet threatened Execution; that is, German troops should occupy Holstein until Frederick withdrew his contemplated administrative changes and abided by the London Treaty.[102]

As British foreign secretary, Russell weighed in by asking the Danes to liberalize their administration of Schleswig, but The Times opposed the Diet's threatened action. Again, Napoleonic adventurism was the real cause of the newspaper's displeasure. This was a poor time for Prussia to be "meddling in her neighbor's affairs" given the emperor's likelihood to exploit the situation.[103] Again, "we are careful not to inquire whether Prussia is right or wrong in

---

[101] Heinrich von Sybel, Die Begründung des Deutschen Reiches durch William I. Vornehmlich nach den preussischen staatsacten, vol. 3 (Munich: R. Oldenburg, 1901), p. 89. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 440.
[102] Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier, op. cit., p. 109; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 440.
[103] Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier, op. cit., p. 109.

considering that Denmark has failed to fulfill the obligations of the treaties into which she has entered. We heard enough of the stammverwandtschaft—affinity of race—between these famous duchies and the rest of the German people in 1848; but we were sanguine enough to hope that people in these days were no more inclined to go to war for sentiments than for ideas."[104]

British public opinion pushed in the direction of intervention on behalf of the Danes whereas Russell was taking his advice from Morier, who was posted to Berlin in the 1850s and became friendly with Prussian liberal-nationalists. Thus, the diplomat forcefully put forth his views in a rebuttal to The Times. According to Murray,

> "Morier described German nationalism as an important means for forestalling Napoleon III's aggressions: 'The Organization of Italian nationality is…for a successful resistance of Napoleonic ideas as nothing compared with the imperative necessity of Germany being united by the only bond which can unite her, that of national Bewusstein.' By criticizing Prussia's German policy in Schleswig-Holstein, The Times was in fact alienating England's best ally in any future struggle against France. It was in England's interests, therefore, to support Prussia as it followed the only course open to it: '[Prussia] must stand and fall with Germany, and if the struggle is to come, better, far better, for her that it should overtake her whilst boná fide carrying out a national policy and at the head of Germany heartily supporting her in such a policy, than in some doubtful personal quarrel, when dynastic jealousies would be sure to put her conduct in a false and odious light.'"[105]

---

[104] The Times, May 5, 1860.
[105] Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier, op. cit., pp. 109-10.

Morier directly advised Russell that "running amuck against German national sentiment was the most suicidal act which England can be capable of."[106] Russell was essentially being told what he wanted to hear. As early as September 1861, Russell wrote to Clarendon, "it is clear that the course of Prussia, although not easy, is grand and glorious. As Austria declines, the star of Prussia must rise. But she must avoid on the one hand the delusions of Nationalverein, and on the other the feudal dreams of his late Prussian Majesty...She must comply with the demand for a free government in Prussia, but not assume stiffly, harshly, pedantically, and prematurely the supremacy in Germany. The pear will fall when it is ripe."[107] In consequence, in September 1862, Russell announced his famous 'Gotha Despatch' which proposed that Schleswig be granted self-government and Denmark, Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg have four independent assemblies of equal authority, even in matters of finance. Morier claimed to be the 'moral author' of this strange project as he had been advising Russell for nearly a year.[108] Naturally, this preference met with enthusiasm in Germany as well as with Victoria, whose preference for Germany was scarcely veiled. But Russell's proposal was short-lived and he had to retract it as Denmark and Sweden objected outright and no support could be found within the British Cabinet considering that public opinion was decidedly pro-Danish.

---

[106] Rosslyn Wemyss, Life of Sir Robert Morier, vol. 1 (London: E. Arnold, 1911), p. 371.
[107] Lord John Russell, Gooch, ed., Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, 1840-1878, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 297.
[108] Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier, op. cit., pp. 110-11.

At the end of March 1863, Frederick rashly issued a Patent that intended to incorporate Schleswig while recognizing that Holstein belonged to the German Confederation, but demanding from it a monetary contribution for joint affairs. This was a clear violation of the Treaty of London that, in turn, produced an uproar among Prussians and Austrians alike, because the German minority was being incorporated against its wish. On July 9 the Federal Diet gave Denmark six weeks to withdraw the Patent and raised again the threat of Execution. Confident of foreign support, on August 26, the Danes rejected the Diet's demand and declared Execution a warlike act. A prime factor in its decision was Palmerston's provocative speech in which he declared

> "an important matter of British policy to maintain the independence of and integrity of the Danish Monarchy…[and while Holstein was a German state, the Confederation had] no rights [in Schleswig, which was] a matter of international law and of European concern. [There was no use in disguising the fact that] what is at the bottom of the German design [to connect Schleswig with Holstein] is the dream of a German fleet and the wish to get Kiel as a German seaport…If any violent attempt were made to overthrow those rights,…it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend."[109]

Russell seconded Palmerston's opinion by writing to Rechberg that, "if Germany persists in confounding Schleswig with Holstein, other Powers of Europe may confound Holstein with Schleswig and deny the right of Germany to interfere

---

[109] Wemyss, Life of Sir Robert Morier, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 391.

with the one any more than she has with the other, except as a European Power."[110]

On September 28, Frederick promulgated a unitary constitution for Denmark and Schleswig—"our kingdom." The Federal Diet countered by demanding that Frederick rescind the Patent by the end of October or else it would proceed with Execution. Succession became a live issue immediately because Frederick died shortly thereafter. All of the lesser German states were in favor of the liberal duke Frederick of Augustenburg as sovereign of the united Duchies. German sentiment ran high in favor of reclamation of the Duchies, just as their ancestors had reclaimed East Prussia from Poland, Pomerania from Sweden, and the Rhineland from France.[111] Immediately, Russell sounded Drouyn as to the possibility of joint action, but he was brusquely reminded that it "would be analogous to the course pursued by British and French in the Polish question [and that the emperor] desires to preserve entire liberty of action for France."[112]

Bismarck appeared to take his stand on respect for international treaties; thus he supported Christian, angering Prussian liberal nationalists. It was not obvious to the liberals at first, but Bismarck wanted the Duchies for Prussia, not for Frederick. Creating another medium-sized state, like Hesse and Hanover,

---

[110] Russell letter to Bloomfield, the British ambassador to Vienna, July 31, 1863, E. Hertslet, ed., State Papers, vol. 1, "Denmark and Germany," no. 99.
[111] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 239.
[112] Spencer Walpole, The Life of Lord John Russell, vol. 2 (New York: Greenwood Press, [1889] 1968), p. 379.

that would fear Prussia and curry favor with Austria was not in his interest.[113] Christian ascended to the throne but was put in the cruel position of either adopting the new constitution, thus bringing on a casus belli by Prussia and Austria, or refuting the constitution and risking his throne due to Danish anger.[114] Public opinion in Austria preferred the Augustenburg candidature, but Franz Joseph was relieved that Bismarck took his stand on international law rather than on national self-determination. Championing the latter throughout Europe but denying it with regard to the Hungarians put the Austrian in a hypocritical light.[115] Christian adopted the constitution and the majority of the German officials in Schleswig then refused to take the oath of allegiance.

Russell was put in an awkward position. He petitioned the Danes to withdraw the constitution as the only way to prevent Execution, but they refused. Thus, the foreign secretary despaired to Monrad, the new Danish premier, "we cannot give active support to a Government which puts itself so manifestly in the wrong." But he also recognized that Germany "was mixing federal right in Holstein, international promises in Schleswig, a common constitution and the succession to the Crown, all in one hash."[116] Palmerston knew that Britain's diplomatic hand was weak, writing to Russell, "Schleswig is

---

[113] France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 4 (Paris: Ficker [etc.] Imprimerie Nationale, 1910), p. 118. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 241.
[114] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 443.
[115] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 244.
[116] Walpole, The Life of Lord John Russell, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 388.

no part of Germany, and its invasion by German troops would be an act of war versus Denmark, which would in my clear opinion entitle Denmark to our active military and naval support. But you and I could not announce such a determination without the concurrence of the Cabinet and the consent of the Queen."[117]

Holstein was occupied by Confederation forces on December 24 and Bismarck warned Buchanan that, by adopting the constitution, Denmark had violated the status quo and that the occupation of Schleswig must follow. If Britain interfered, Prussia would declare the London Treaty void since Prussia could not simultaneously adhere to the treaty while tolerating Denmark's violation of it.[118] This was clearly casuistry insofar as one clause did not preclude the other. Upon advice from ambassadors Bloomfield and Buchanan, Russell petitioned the queen that strong language toward Vienna and Berlin would be "conducive to the maintenance of the peace."[119] Russia, France, and Sweden should be invited with Britain to jointly represent to the Diet that the invasion of Schleswig would be "an act of aggression on non-German territory" which would probably meet resistance. Denmark proposed a conference for

---

[117] Walpole, The Life of Lord John Russell, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 388. Goddard relies on an abbreviated version of this comment to argue that Britain was serious about either joint or single-handed military action. But the opposing views of the queen and the majority of the Cabinet towards action are key to understanding the reality of Palmerston's observation. See, Goddard, "When Right Makes Might: How Prussia Overturned the European Balance of Power, op. cit., p. 132.
[118] von Sybel, Die Begründung des Deutschen Reiches, vol. 3, op. cit., p. 153. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 445.
[119] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 162.

consideration of the Duchies question to which the Germans should assent.[120] But Victoria demanded that Russell's proposal be vetted by the Cabinet, which then deleted any aggressive diplomatic language towards Prussia. Palmerston and Russell were therefore defeated by a government that had no intention of going to war over the Duchies.[121] The Cabinet marked time by consenting to petition the other powers as to their attitudes toward Prussian aggression. Not surprisingly, Cowley reported a conversation with Drouyn in which the latter stated that "the question of Poland had shown that Great Britain could not be relied upon when war was in the distances…"[122] Napoleon preferred a modification to the treaty instead of war with Germany. Cowley attributed this reasoning to "1. A rankling disappointment at the failure of the projected Congress and a desire to justify the project in the eyes of the world by the spectacle of a conflict which might have been avoided had the project been accepted. 2. Anger towards Her Majesty's Government for their imputed

---

[120] Proposed Russell telegram to Cowley (France), Napier (Russia), and Jenningham (Sweden) of January 8, 1864. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 162.

[121] Clarendon captured the situation nicely by observing that Russell "though halting between two opinions, or rather not liking to come down from the height of swagger to which he had climbed, yet had no chance of being allowed by his colleagues to go to war single-handed with Germany" (F.A. Wellesley, ed., The Paris Embassy during the Second Empire: Selections from the papers of Henry Richard Charles Wellesley, 1st Earl of Cowley, ambassador at Paris, 1852-1867 (London: T. Butterworth, 1928), p. 261.)

[122] Cowley to Russell, January 3, 1864, cited in Lawrence D. Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), p. 166.

abandonment of France in the Polish question. 3. The possibility that out of the complications something may turn up advantageous to France."[123]

Austro-Prussian forces invaded Schleswig on February 1, 1864. The British Cabinet immediately supported a proposal for an armistice following the evacuation of Schleswig by the Danes. Both Austria and Prussia rejected the proposal. Not for public consumption, it was later disclosed that Roon, the Prussian war minister, revealed Bismarck's motivated bias to seize the Duchies for Germany: "the question is not one of right, but of force, and we have the force."[124] Russell angrily denounced the military invasion by opining that France should march her army to the Rhine and Britain send the fleet to Copenhagen.[125] But Palmerston was more circumspect, confiding to Russell that he doubted "whether the Cabinet or the country are as yet prepared for active interference. The truth is, that to enter into a military conflict with all Germany on continental ground would be a serious undertaking."[126] The reality was that Britain could only send an army of 20,000 troops whereas Prussia and Austria together could field 200,000-300,000 troops. Moreover, fear for French adventurism and consequent security of the Low Countries figured in the prime minister's

---

[123] Cowley to Russell, January 15, 1864, cited in Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question, ibid., p. 167.
[124] Pierre de La Gorce, Historire de la Seconde République, vol. 4 (Paris: Plon, 1904), p. 49. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 445.
[125] Russell memorandum, February 13, 1864, cited in Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question, ibid., p. 175; Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 108.
[126] Palmerston letter to Russell, February 13, 1864, cited in Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer and the Hon. Evelyn Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1876), p. 247.

reticence as well.[127] Palmerston's reasoning revealed the kernel of the problem regarding the Duchies. Without the help of Napoleon, British action alone against the Germans would be ineffective. But to enlist the help of France would court dangers on the Rhine. A choice between Germany in the Duchies or France on the Rhine would come down in favor of the former. Palmerstonian diplomacy had consistently restrained France (while intermittently working with it) and Russia and strengthened Germany. To reverse course would involve a diplomatic revolution likely to bring down the government. Russell was the only Cabinet member prepared to oppose Germany and in this he had vacillating opinions.[128]

Both Austria and Prussia professed their adherence to international law to the tsar as the reason for invading the Duchies, but also their continued belief in maintaining the integrity of Denmark. These professions also allayed fears by the British Cabinet regarding its conciliatory attitude.[129] But Alexander hoped that Bismarck would attend the conference proposed by the Danes. The Prussian agreed as long as no pre-conditions were set. Thus, the Danes were turned down

---

[127] Palmerston letter to Russell February 13, 1864, cited in Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 2, ibid., p. 247.
[128] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 177.
[129] Erich Brandenburg, Otto Hoetzsch, and Hermann Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 4, (Oldenburg: Historischen Reichskommission, 1938), pp. 255-57. Cited in Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question, op. cit., p. 177.

by the signatories to the London Treaty regarding military intervention.[130] But the Prussians crossed near Denmark proper itself by invading Jutland. Palmerston confided to Somerset, first lord of the Admiralty, that "Austria and Prussia, reckoning upon our passive attitude, contemplate the occupation of Copenhagen…and mean to dictate at the Danish capital their own terms of peace. We should be laughed at if we stood by and allowed this to be done."[131] Cowley then reported that a Prussian threat to invade Saxony alarmed Napoleon and that a joint naval demonstration might be entertained. Russell, without consulting the Cabinet, informed Drouyn that he intimated in Vienna that if allied troops remained in Jutland, a British squadron would be sent to Copenhagen.[132] Russell then asked Gorchakov through Napier to assist in the naval demonstration, but the vice chancellor temporized by stating that because the Gulf of Finland would be frozen until May, Russian warships could not appear before the middle of that month. When asked about Russian ships in American ports, Gorchakov stated that it would be two months before they could reach the Baltic; besides they were of a class not befitting the dignity of the Russian navy for the purpose of armed mediation.[133]

---

[130] S. Lesnik, "Russia and Prussia in the Schleswig-Holstein Question," Krasny Archiv, vol. 2, no. 93 (1939), p. 115.
[131] Palmerston memorandum to Somerset, February 19, 1864, cited in Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 249.
[132] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 180-81.
[133] Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question, op. cit., p. 198. Mosse observes that the British sounded the Russians to a joint naval demonstration to which the

Even Russell was not in earnest. Assurances from both Berlin and Vienna that the advance into Jutland was accidental and that there was no determination to attack Denmark proper led him to inform Drouyn that the proposal to send a British squadron to the Baltic has been dropped.[134] Metternich, the Austrian ambassador to Paris, informed Napoleon that a Franco-British naval demonstration would keep Austria and Prussia together, whereas Austria desired to get out of the scrape.[135] This importuning at the behest of the conservative Drouyn and empress Eugénie, coupled with Russell's hesitancy, led the emperor to quash any idea of opposing Germany with Britain as an ally. When the Cabinet repudiated Russell's initiatives, France and Russia were informed that there was no chance that the British fleet would be dispatched to Danish waters.[136]

Upon hearing that Prussia accepted a conference to be attended by the London Treaty signatories, as well as a member of the German Confederation, both Russell and Gorchakov deluded themselves into believing that it was the

---

latter was not completely averse. Goddard relies too heavily on this rather non-commital response as evidence that Britain and Russia were serious about military intervention, either jointly or single-handedly. See, Mosse, "Queen Victoria and her Ministers in the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis 1863-1864," English Historical Review, vol. 78, no. 307 (April 1963), p. 273; Goddard, "When Right Makes Might: How Prussia Overturned the European Balance of Power, op. cit., p. 119.

[134] Mosse, "Queen Victoria and her Ministers in the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis 1863-1864," English Historical Review, ibid., p. 277; Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question, op. cit., p. 192.

[135] Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question, op. cit., p. 194.

[136] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 149.

threat of armed mediation that brought the aggressors to the peace table.[137] They were quickly disabused of this notion as the German powers decided to extend hostilities to the entire Jutland at the same time they signaled their readiness to conclude an armistice and attend the conference. By March 20 the entire southern Jutland had been captured.

In anticipation of the conference, Cowley was sent to Paris for one last effort at joint action. Clarendon reported that Napoleon stated that, "we had received a gros soufflet with respect to Poland from Russia and to get another from Germany without resenting it was more than he could stand. He could not therefore join us in strong language to the German Powers, not being prepared to go to war with them…He must be all the more cautious owing to the widespread belief in his designs for compensation on the Rhine: and he was not ready to pursue one policy on the Eider and a totally different one on the Po."[138]

Napoleon would therefore not champion Italian nationalism, on the one hand, but thwart the nationalism of the Schleswig-Holsteiners by supporting the Danish monarchy, on the other hand. It is true that the Duchies bristled under Danish chauvinism, but it is also true that the Duchies had interests of their own apart from Denmark, as well as Germany. While Napoleon was cognizant of the distrust expressed throughout Europe towards his presumed pretensions on the Rhine, he was not being fully honest with Clarendon. Napoleon proposed that a

---

[137] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 186.
[138] Steefel, The Schleswig-Holstein Question, op. cit., p. 205.

plebiscite be called to consider the wishes of the inhabitants of the Duchies. Oddly, Palmerston advocated this plan in 1848 and Russell backed a plebiscite in Italy, but now Britain vetoed it as being too new for Europe to handle. The foreign secretary stated that "the Great Powers had not the habit of consulting populations when questions affecting the Balance of Power had to be settled."[139] This was an obvious slap at France because it was scarcely hidden that Napoleon had also cast about for an understanding with Prussia, offering to support Bismarck in annexing the Duchies outright for Germany as long as the plebiscite would be called. Napoleon was looking for future favors to come.[140] Bismarck kept Napoleon interested by dangling the carrot of territory on the west bank of the Rhine.[141] Moreover, he stated that he would consider the plebiscite as long as the partition of Schleswig was inevitable. Even if it could be determined how the plebiscite was to be conducted, popularly, or through consultation of the ducal estates, it was obvious to Russell that the election would be a sham: "in fact even the evacuation of the Duchies by the troops of Austria and Prussia and of Denmark also would not now render it possible to have an election of a sovereign fairly conducted, even if the principle were admitted. For German

---

[139] La Tour d'Auvergne, French ambassador to London, letter to Drouyn, March 24, 1864. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 151.
[140] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 449.
[141] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 248. It is irrelevant whether Bismarck was making an offer in earnest. Napoleon was willing to be taken in even as Germans would never approve the voluntary cession of ancestral lands.

agitators have so disturbed all the elements of peace and order that the population would give their votes under the influence of terror."[142]

By April 18 the lines of the Düppel, the last fortification on Schleswig, had been breached and abandoned by the Danes. Only the small Danish navy and the Baltic Sea separated the Germans from an invasion of Denmark proper as the conference opened in London. Napoleon congratulated Wilhelm on his military success and then advised the king of Sweden to abandon any idea of an armed intervention on behalf of Denmark.[143] At the end of the month Napoleon informed the Danes that Britain would do nothing for them and that "they would be wise to accept the frontier line [in Schleswig] offered by Prussia as otherwise she risked losing everything."[144]

The London Conference opened on April 25 and sat for two months, breaking up after the failure to achieve any agreement. Victoria opposed any alliance with Napoleon whereas Palmerston believed that Britain and France could work together to keep the entire 1852 London Treaty intact. Russell took a middle position believing that Britain should support Napoleon's plan for a plebiscite. But due to fractiousness within the British government, Clarendon, the British plenipotentiary, showed with no instructions other than to propose an

---

[142] Russell letter to Cowley, April 9, 1864, Foreign Office 1518/27, no. 356, draft. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 187.
[143] France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 439. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 449.
[144] de La Gorce, Historire de la Seconde République, vol. 4, op. cit., p. 511. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 448.

armistice.[145] Thus the conference was a dismal affair for all members save for the German aggressors. Bismarck demanded a victor's peace; no longer was the integrity of the Danish monarchy even being given lip-service. The German powers earlier professed to base their invasion of the Duchies on respect for the London Treaty of 1852. After initial military success, they then proposed that a personal union between the Duchies and the king of Denmark might be continued. This, of course, was unacceptable to the Danes who wanted to incorporate the Duchies within Denmark outright.[146] Bismarck now became annoyed that a plebiscite in the Duchies might demand a withdrawal of German troops. This was incomprehensible to him.[147] Now, in light of their unopposed success, outright annexation of the Duchies was being demanded.[148] Gorchakov warned Bismarck that due to British public opinion, Prussian intransigence would force Britain into the arms of France. Britain might not sanction French aggression on the Rhine outright, but it would surely follow were Britain and Prussia to become embroiled with each other.[149] Bismarck countered by arguing that a war with Britain would serve his purposes because it would unite all of

---

[145] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 188.
[146] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 249; Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 236.
[147] Oubril letter to Gorchakov, April 23, 1864, cited in Lesnik, "Russia and Prussia in the Schleswig-Holstein Question," op. cit., p. 87.
[148] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 193.
[149] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 198-99.

Germany.[150] Moreover, in the event of a French attack, Russia would have to come to the aid of Prussia in order to avoid having French troops in Posen and Cracow.[151] Finally, Bismarck made the rather unanswerable claim that if Prussia failed to annex the Duchies as demanded by the liberal-nationalists, Wilhelm would be forced to abdicate and he would resign his office, thus ushering in a liberal German state with revolutionary aspirations. The British were sympathetic toward the German liberals, but Morier despised Bismarck's authoritarianism as traitorous to the German cause, and he, like his fellow Whigs, would welcome the minister-president's departure from the political scene.[152] Thus, Bismarck argued that this was yet another route by which revolution might sweep Europe to the detriment of the conservative powers. On May 28 Apponyi, on behalf of Austria and Prussia, proposed that the Duchies be separated from Denmark. Russia was the last of the London signatories to abandon the 1852 treaty as Alexander ceded his rights in Holstein to Christian who was recommended as the future ruler of the united Duchies. The conference broke down because Prussia refused to renew the expiring armistice save for a period of six months. Monrad, the Danish premier, appealed to London,

---

[150] Gorchakov to Brunnow, Russian ambassador to London, July 1, 1864, cited in Lesnik, "Russia and Prussia in the Schleswig-Holstein Question," op. cit., p. 101.
[151] Bismarck memorandum to Werther, Prussian ambassador to Paris, June 14, 1864, cited in Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 3, op. cit., notes 136 and 148. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 153.
[152] Murray, Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier, op. cit., p. 114; Kennedy, The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914, op. cit., p. 13.

reminding it that "Denmark had step by step followed the advice of the neutral Powers, and especially that of the English Cabinet, [but that] Denmark was still without allies." Russell replied on July 6 that H.M.G. sympathized "with king and people in the severe trial which they have been obliged to undergo, [but that they] have never engaged themselves, nor can they now, to support the Danish cause by force of arms, or to impose upon Germany the conditions suggested in the conference."[153] The armistice expired as the conference concluded and Prussian forces proceeded to capture the island of Alsen, thus threatening the integrity of Zealand. Consequently, the Eider-Dane Cabinet fell and Denmark had to sue for peace by ceding Lauenburg, Schleswig, and Holstein to the German aggressors. Russell tried to put a good face on the debacle of unopposed German aggression: "I trust the Danes and Germans will now make peace, leaving the Danes free from German interference and giving the Germans over to German rule…I am very glad we have not given in to the temptation of war between France and Germany. The French, if they get an inch, will certainly take an ell."[154]

Testing asymmetric affective abandonment.

At first blush expected utility might provide a reasonable explanation of the Danish War over the Duchies. British diplomats tended to take notice of increasing Prussian and Austrian aggression and initially offered suggestions

---

[153] E. Hertslet, ed., State Papers, vol. 4, "Denmark and Germany (1864)," nos. 1 and 2.

[154] Walpole, The Life of Lord John Russell, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 396.

(e.g., the Gotha Despatch) as to how Denmark might mollify German nationalistic impulses regarding the Duchies. Moreover, Russell twice sounded out the French for joint action, but was repeatedly rebuffed. Then the foreign secretary himself engaged diplomatically, first, to petition the government to use strong language in protest of German aggression, and second, to threaten the Austrians to halt their persistent attacks on Jutland. Finally, he also tried to organize a three-party naval demonstration in support of armed mediation against the Germans, but was rebuffed, both by France and by Russia. Although Palmerston and Russell were far out in front of what the Cabinet was willing to do, the prime minister was spot on in identifying Prussian ambitions to obtain a naval port in Kiel as well as to annex Schleswig and Holstein. Thus, in favor of an expected utility explanation, new information was appropriately being employed to further cement preferences for intervention on behalf of the Danes as the situation materially changed due to increasing German bellicosity. It is true that Denmark was technically in the wrong to issue a Patent to incorporate Schleswig. But Palmerston began to realize that Bismarck was looking for any excuse for a casus belli in order to invade the Duchies.[155]

Nevertheless, as the international stakes increased with Prussian aggression towards Denmark, the British Cabinet became more and more convinced that it could maintain its diplomatic prestige by a policy of strict non-intervention in Continental affairs. Unfortunately, such a stance lowered its

[155] Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit. pp. 372-73.

prestige as the Continental powers had historically grown used to valuing Britain to the degree that she made her presence felt.[156] Napier later revealed the growing German attitude towards Britain which stands as a proxy for the rest of Europe: "There never was a period in wh. England was an object of so much dislike to all parties in Germany, as at present, Conservatives, Constitutionalists, Ultra Liberals, Unionists, separatists,—all join in one way only—in repugnance to England, in noting her prosperity, & in undervaluing her power…France is hated too. But France is watched with anxiety and respected."[157]

This motivated bias to conduct British foreign policy on the Continent in a strictly non-interventionist manner is well revealed in the acrimonious parliamentary debate in which Palmerston and Russell were censured by the opposition. Disraeli began with Palmerston's

> "fatal encouragement of the Danes in his speech of 23 July 1863, and then turning to [Russell's] Polish policy and 'that curt, and as I conceive, most offensive reply' to the emperor's suggestion of a congress. If, however, the intervention urged by Russell had been accepted by Napoleon, it 'must inevitably have produced a great European War.' As it was, the Government's policy was one of 'menaces never accomplished and promises never fulfilled.' The London Conference just completed was a 'barren failure', and the British Government's contribution to it had been proposals for 'the dismemberment of Denmark—so much for integrity,' and for a 'joint guarantee of the Powers—so much for independence…The position of England in the counsels of Europe is essentially that of a moderating and mediatorial Power. Within twelve months we have been twice repulsed at St. Petersburg, Austria has allowed our menaces to pass her like the idle wind. We have threatened Prussia, and Prussia has defied

---

[156] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 6.
[157] Napier memorandum to Clarendon, January 5, 1866, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, vol. 1, 1/43. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 6.

> us…They [Palmerston and Russell] have alienated Russia, they have estranged France, and then they call Parliament together to declare war against Germany…I find Europe impotent to vindicate public law, because all the great alliances are broken down.'"[158]

The Tories summarized by arguing that Britain's national interests lay overseas in its colonies rather than in Europe and that the balance of power was "founded on the obsolete traditions of an antiquated system."[159] Thus, Disraeli and the Conservatives offered nothing other than to hew to a policy of strict non-intervention in Continental affairs.

For her part, Victoria, through her ministerial confidant, Granville, repeatedly exploited the divisions within the Cabinet to frustrate what she considered to be the anti-German policy of "those two dreadful old men," Palmerston and Russell.[160] Although the queen discerned the complexity of the issue insofar as the Duchies had interests apart from both Denmark and Germany, still, the true nature of the conflict was that of a major power bullying a smaller one. Thus, even though she appeared even-handed in her detestation for both Denmark and Prussia over this issue, Victoria's attitude ended up abetting a Cabinet that was predisposed to a policy of strict non-intervention in Continental affairs. Her motivated bias to leave Denmark to its fate also figured

---

[158] Hansard, op. cit., vol. clxxvi, July 4, 1864, pp. 725-50.
[159] Hansard, op. cit., vol. clxxvi, July 4, 1864, p. 731.
[160] Arthur C. Benson and Viscount Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1908), p. 168; Mosse, "Queen Victoria and her Ministers in the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis 1863-1864," op. cit., pp. 282-83.

in the calculations made by the other major powers that might have assisted Britain in opposing this German aggression.[161]

The Whigs were also attacked from the opposite end of the political spectrum as the Radicals argued that the philosophy of laissez-faire ought to be applied to foreign policy. Thus, Cobden was able to ominously crow that "there is one great change amounting to a revolution which has been accomplished in our foreign policy. After the fiasco last Session on the Danish question, our Foreign Office will never again attempt to involve us in any European entanglements for the Balance of Power, or for any dynastic purpose. Henceforth, we shall observe an absolute abstention from Continental politics. Non-intervention is the policy of all future governments in this country."[162] Bernhardi, a Prussian diplomat posted to Italy at the time, put his finger on an aspect of the British problem by sneering that, "they don't want to pay more than 7d. in the £ income tax, and know very well that it will rise to 10d. if there is war."[163] Thus, self-interested awareness regarding the loss of trade, the ruin of credit, material losses, and attendant civil unrest associated with war were the factors dominating British foreign policy during this period.[164]

---

[161] Mosse, "Queen Victoria and her Ministers in the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis 1863-1864," op. cit., p. 282.
[162] John Morley, The Life of Richard Cobden, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1903), p. 450.
[163] Theodor von Bernhardi, Der Streit um die Elbherzogthümer (BiblioBazaar, [pre-1923] 2008), p. 367. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 446.
[164] Kennedy, The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914, op. cit., p. 17.

In consequence, Palmerston's policy over the Duchies question was one of pure bluff given how constrained he was by the Cabinet. As Bourne notes, "Palmerston's policy of bluff was certainly always dangerous—and it was made more so by Russell's tendency to forget that it was bluff."[165] Thus, one could argue that both diplomats, with their bellicose public comments directed toward the Germans, unintentionally led on the Danes to a degree that was deplorable, but the latter had motivated biases to believe that international support could automatically be assumed. Palmerston's gambit was to scare off the aggressors early with loud talk. But Bismarck was not the least concerned after he was able to ensure Austrian cooperation. Ultimately, both British statesmen were beaten down by their isolation. They eventually professed to be swayed by Prussian and Austrian assurances that the aggressive actions comported with international law and support for the status quo. These preference reversals were likely the result of anticipated negative regret considering Palmerston's stark assessment of the imbalance of military forces that would occur with British participation in a war against Germany. Such preference reversals might be considered rationally consistent regarding one's environment, but one engages in irrational consistency to believe that it is German rectitude rather than being manifestly outmanned as the reason for coming to terms with the situation. Thus, it is difficult to accept that Russell really believed his statement cited above in which

[165] Bourne, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902, op. cit., p. 109.

the Germans were exonerated for their aggression but in which the French were manifestly in the wrong for proposing war.

Still, it is not clear at what point Britain would be forced to intervene. It was taken for granted that an invasion of Denmark proper would be a casus belli for Britain. But even this threshold is debatable. Palmerston allowed that Britain might intervene effectively in the narrow territory of Jutland and Schleswig. Thus, with the aid of 30,000 Danes and 20,000 Swedes, 20,000 British troops would not necessarily be outnumbered at the point of attack by Prussian and Austrian forces. Given that Britain possessed the world's finest navy, the prime minister feared a national disgrace were Prussia and Austria to sail before British shores enroute to occupying the capital of a friendly power with which Britain had mutual interests and treaty obligations. Palmerston argued that this action should be disallowed regardless of whether Britain had to act alone or not.[166] It was lucky for Britain that the German aggressors refrained from conducting such an enterprise, but it is still not clear that the British would have opposed them militarily had they done so.

From this analysis, it can be argued that Britain used the insurance premium in risky fashion. It is usually believed that making concessions in order to avoid war, hence casualties, is a conservative approach. But given Britain's proximity to the Baltic Sea, it was fatuous to believe that the Black, or the

---

[166] Palmerston letter to Victoria, February 22, 1864, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, vol. 1, 219/94. Cited in Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 161.

Adriatic, Sea, respectively, was a more important security concern as had been variously argued.[167] How could the British Cabinet even contemplate allowing German naval forces to pass before the British mainland enroute to attacking a threatened ally? Of what use was the British navy if not for deterring such aggression? Not only were the Germans unlawfully taking endowments from Denmark, but they were also taking from Britain in as much as the latter's prestige to stem this motivated aggression was brazenly being challenged. Pflanze argues that the odds against Bismarck annexing the Duchies for Prussia were enormous. Britain and Austria were completely against annexation; Russia mildly so. All of the lesser German states favored the Augustenburg candidature. Napoleon's secretive support for Prussia was both costly, and, when found out, quite treacherous.[168] Britain had potential allies with which to thwart Prussian-led aggression against Denmark, but it frittered away this option with a half-hearted, and quickly reversed, preference for joint action.

The motivated biases on the part of Napoleon to avoid intervention were equally debilitating. The British learned quickly how linked the Duchies, and the Polish, questions, respectively, were related in the mind of the emperor. The French response to the Duchies problem merely made manifest the end of the Franco-British entente that was sundered over the British response to the Polish Uprising. In particular, due to his indelicate diplomatic style, Russell's

---

[167] See, for instance, Cowley's letter to Russell, June 20, 1864, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 204.
[168] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 241.

appointment to the foreign office was seriously resented by the French. But if Palmerston and Russell were at fault it was largely due to their failure to recognize that they had to come to terms with France, perhaps risk Napoleonic adventurism on the Rhine, and risk see their government fall over this diplomatic revolution.[169] Napoleon would only act "if England sends troops and disembarks them"was the caustic reply to Cowley's query regarding possible French participation in joint military action against the Germans during the London Conference.[170] Thus, the emperor wanted to see the British committed beyond recall before he would act. But the price he was demanding for his assistance included territorial revisions for Italy, Poland, and, of course, France.[171] Since Britain would not pay that price, Napoleon indiscriminately reversed preference by offering benevolent neutrality to Bismarck in exchange for favors to come. This was a mistake because Bismarck tempted but ultimately made no offer of territorial concessions. The emperor wanted to settle scores with Palmerston and Russell, but he overreached. Thus, by failing to cooperate with Britain, however non-committally, France ended up estranging her without achieving anything substantive. Moreover, Napoleon ended up sacrificing

---

[169] Mosse argues that Palmerston and Russell should have tendered their resignations to the queen had they been serious about intervention. See, Mosse, "Queen Victoria and her Ministers in the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis 1863-1864," op. cit., p. 273.

[170] Rouher, French minister of state, to Cowley, de La Gorce, Historire de la Seconde République, vol. 4, op. cit., p. 512. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 452.

[171] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 211.

nationalist principles that he ultimately could not enforce without risk to both France and his throne (the coming Franco-Prussian War of 1870) because he was then without allies, having estranged Russia and Austria as well.[172]

Thus, for different reasons, both France and Britain used the insurance premium in risky fashion by failing to jointly oppose the German powers. Napoleon's overreaching in this instance cost him future British goodwill. British dithering, and its unwillingness to take a chance on France, was costly in terms of prestige both then and in the future. The certainty principle is relevant here in that the western powers were not willing to cooperate enough to produce joint action in order to substantially reduce the risk of Prussian-led aggression succeeding.

[172] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 261.

Chapter 6: Asymmetric affective abandonment: Bismarck's wars of unification: The Seven Weeks' Austro-Prussian War (1866).

Ostensibly a dispute over joint administration of the Elbe Duchies, Bismarck demonstrated a motivated bias to maneuver Austria into declaring war on Prussia in order to dissolve the Confederation and kick Austria out of Germany. This view is contestable from two quarters. The first is a rational choice explanation which argues that Bismarck might have been satisfied with an Austrian sale of Holstein to Prussia in conjunction with Prussian support, both for Austria's position in Venetia and for aid in the reacquisition of Lombardy from Italy, respectively.[1] The second position, notwithstanding the minister-president's boasting,[2] argues that the situation was extremely fluid and that a fortuitous concatenation of external and internal forces allowed for a largely unexpected resounding success in unifying Germany north of the River Main.[3] Neither of these positions is tenable. Again, this case study will argue that the severely imbalanced nature of the European system, largely resulting from motivated biases on the parts of the major powers to abstain from intervention, allowed Prussia a free hand to engage in motivated aggression against an

---

[1] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 225-43.
[2] Bismarck stated to Disraeli in 1862, "I shall seize the first good pretext to declare war against Austria, dissolve the German Diet, subdue the minor states, and give national unity to Germany under Prussian leadership." And, Disraeli commented, "he means what he says." Cited in George Buckle and William F. Monypenny, Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, vol. 4 (London: Macmillan Co., 1910-20), p. 341.
[3] Lothar Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, volume 1, 1851-1871 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), pp. 277, 295.

isolated Austria. Austria, in turn, proved irrationally risk acceptant for loss to a degree unwarranted by the situation.

In August 1864, negotiations between Austria and Prussia over administration of the Duchies ran aground when Bismarck refused modest requests regarding the renewal of the Zollverein. Rechberg, the Austrian foreign minister, who worked to conciliate Prussia, resigned and foreign policy fell to the anti-Prussians, Mensdorff and Esterházy.[4] The earlier Danish war was largely a Prussian affair; the Austrians did not want possession of the Duchies, but they could not allow Prussia to take them outright. Now, Austria proposed that Prussia should annex the Duchies in exchange for the county of Glatz (lost to Prussia in 1742). Both Wilhelm and Bismarck vetoed this offer and the latter essentially demanded that Prussia annex the Duchies outright without giving compensation. Franz Joseph, in turn, rejected this option. The Prussian crown council considered war against Austria, forcing the latter to come to terms codified in the Gastein Convention. Austria sold its rights in Lauenburg to Prussia. Thus, Austria was to administer Holstein while Prussia was to administer Schleswig and Lauenburg.

Upon receiving Schleswig, Bismarck immediately petitioned Austria for Holstein in return for an indemnity to which Vienna declined. According to Pflanze, "like two boxers, Bismarck and Mensdorff circled warily, the one aggressive, the other defensive. The Junker's task was to find, the general's to

---

[4] Richard B. Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," Central European History, vol. 4, issue 2 (1971), p. 153.

avoid, a casus belli that would place Austria in the wrong."[5] Spoiling for a fight, Bismarck sent furious missives to Vienna regarding its perfidy, intended to convince Wilhelm that the issue could only be settled by war. Wilhelm was stubbornly conscientious and Bismarck was afraid that he could not bring his sovereign to take action based on the possibilities associated with a policy of Machtpolitik. Thus, "like a clock, it was said in Berlin, the king had to be wound up each morning by his minister-president."[6] Since the 1850s, Bismarck argued that the federal relationship between Prussia and Austria must be reconstituted because the two states were "smothering each other". Bismarck's objectives were manifold; dissolve the Confederation likely through war, keep Britain and Russia from intervening, secure benevolent neutrality from France and mobilize the lesser German states in order to unify Germany.[7] Domestic politics were failing Bismarck; he could not deliver a Constitution and the liberals engaged in a decade-long attempt to increase parliamentary power at the expense of royal prerogative.[8] As Eulenburg, minister of the interior, argued, success in foreign policy would lead to success domestically by conquering the liberal opposition in Prussia. Bismarck replied that domestic success was merely a by-product of his motive to prosecute war against Austria: "Even if the government found itself at peace with the country [I] would have advised in favour of war…Domestic

---

[5] Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 293.
[6] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, ibid., p. 293.
[7] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 277.
[8] Gordon A. Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), Chapter 4.

considerations do not make a war necessary, but they are additional reasons for making it seem advantageous."[9] By February 1866 Bismarck convinced Wilhelm to begin diplomatic and military preparations for the impending conflict.

Systemic imbalance.

What were the reactions of the other major European powers and could they cooperate with each other in order to put a stop to Prussian aggression? Before process-tracing the diplomatic history of this conflict, empirical evidence regarding the imbalanced nature of the European system at this point is elucidated. Both the Second Polish Uprising and the war over the Duchies significantly influenced the later opinions of others largely in the direction of non-intervention. Russia regretted the conflict between Prussia and Austria largely because both were territorial cordons against French interference in Poland. Moreover, internal reform took top priority with the tsar. Prusso-Russian relations were cordial but Alexander regretted Bismarck's ruthlessness. Both Russia and Austria were in agreement over maintaining the status quo in the Principalities, but the latter's turbulent internal and external situation stemming from ethnic problems within its empire and its parlous financial condition made it a very unreliable and needy potential ally. Franco-Russian relations, although cordial, were insincere ever since the former interposed itself in the earlier Polish Uprising. British-Russian relations were in agreement over maintenance of the

[9] Cited in Theodore S. Hamerow, The Social Foundations of German Unification 1858-1871, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 239-40; Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," op. cit., p. 154.

status quo in Europe although there were points of contention between the two states in Central Asia. But on the whole, Russia would only react in Germany were its direct interests threatened, which it believed not to be the case.

From Paris, Cowley reported that the anti-Prussian Drouyn took umbrage at the Gastein agreement in which the victors divided the spoils: "There was really no other excuse for the conduct of the two great German Powers than that, having possessed themselves of the Duchies by force, they now thought to treat them as suited the political requirements of the moment without reference to past declarations and engagements, to the wishes of the Duchies themselves, or to the voice of Germany."[10] Nevertheless, Napoleon had no interest in opposing the two allied German powers regarding Denmark. Although registering formal disapproval of the unprovoked aggression, Paris would do little more than admonish the Prussians. Rather, as will later be demonstrated, Napoleon looked on in favor of a Prusso-Austrian conflict in which he could benefit in the role of tertius gaudens by seeking to collect from the two belligerents in return for his benevolent neutrality.

Britain was now engaged in its high point of non-intervention regarding German unification. Although not taken in by arguments that Germany would liberalize once it completed unification, Palmerston heartily endorsed Prussian

[10] Cowley letter to Russell, August 29, 1865, cited in Arthur C. Benson and Viscount Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1908), p. 276.

annexation of the Danish Duchies precisely because he knew it would aid in keeping France and Russia at bay:

> "[I]t is better that [the Duchies] should go to increase the power of Prussia, than that they should form another little state to be added to the cluster of small bodies politic which encumber Germany, and render it of less force than it ought to be in the general balance of power in the world. Prussia is too weak as she now is ever to be honest or independent in her action; and, with a view to the future, it is desirable that Germany, in the aggregate, should be strong, in order to control those two ambitious and aggressive powers, France and Russia, that press upon her west and east."[11]

Victoria seconded Palmerston's belief in German unity but wishfully continued to believe that "a strong united liberal Germany would be a most useful ally to England."[12] She reversed preference by urging that Britain intervene to prevent the war, but, as Palmerston not unfairly noted, she reversed course because it was obvious that Bismarck was intent on extinguishing the petty dynastic thrones, notably that of Coburg.[13]

Vienna later petitioned the other major European powers to intervene against Prussian aggression but the problem stemmed from the former's essential isolation. Austria might have bought Russian assistance, both by

---

[11] Palmerston letter to Russell, September 13, 1865, cited in Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer and the Hon. Evelyn Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1876), p. 270.
[12] Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 364.
[13] Victoria's daughter was the Prussian crown princess who, along with the duchess of Coburg, argued to the queen that no one in Berlin, save for Bismarck, was spoiling for war. See, correspondence with the queen, March 28, 1866, cited in Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 312. Palmerston letter to Russell, September 13, 1865, cited in Bulwer and Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 270.

supporting the Oldenburg candidature in the Duchies and by maintaining support for Russian suppression of Romanian nationalism in the Principalities. But this would incur the ire of Napoleon who championed the Romanians as well as liberal opinion in Germany that supported the Augustenburg candidature in the Duchies. Austrian support could be won from France and Britain through an informal plan to sell Venetia to Italy, but this option involved serious complications with Russia because the plan was linked with compensations offered to Austria in the Principalities.[14] Why were territorial compensations necessary? It is not in the nature of a major power to divest itself of major holdings for a cash settlement. This reflects an understood risk acceptance for loss at the psychological level, but it is also in the nature of a major European power during the 19th century not to conduct oneself in this manner without appropriate equivalent territorial compensation. This is because doing so would call into question one's rights and status to continue as a major European power.[15] As Mosse notes, "the policy of buying Russian sympathy, therefore, would almost automatically provoke a revolutionary coalition of France, Prussia, Italy, the Magyars and probably Romania; that of appeasing Napoleon was certain to bring about a Russo-Prussian alliance."[16] Although both options posed problems, Franz Joseph was to conduct himself as he had always

---

[14] Nancy Nichols Barker, "Austria, France, and the Venetian Question: 1861-1866," Journal of Modern History, vol. 36, no. 2 (1964), pp. 145-54.
[15] Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," op. cit., p. 163.
[16] Werner E. Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 213.

done by refusing to make timely concessions in order to secure at least one ally. Thus, Austria might have maintained itself in Germany by giving up its possessions in Italy or it might have maintained itself in Italy by peaceably leaving Germany to the Prussians. But it did neither and ended up facing a two-front war sandwiched between Prussia and Italy without active assistance from a single other major European power.[17] Russell's comment that "Austria is wrong in Italy, right in Germany,"[18] if not derived from a motivated preference for a united Italy, at least makes the reasonable observation that Austria needed to make choices and that it could not continue to hold on to both territories in isolation.[19]

French and Prussian overtures for risk acceptance for gain and European non-intervention.

With these preliminary comments in mind, it is necessary to examine in detail the motivated biases of the various major powers for non-intervention as the

---

[17] This is the conventional, and I believe the correct, analysis. See, Chester W. Clark, Franz Joseph and Bismarck: The Diplomacy of Austria before the War of 1866 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934); A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 156; Robert W. Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 468.

[18] Cited in Herbert Maxwell, The Life and Letters of George William Frederick, Fourth Earl of Clarendon, vol. 2 (London: Edward Arnold, 1913), p. 318.

[19] Elrod denies this point arguing that the cession of Venetia would not have solved its problems. In particular, he believes that the Italians would have demanded more, likely Rome; that Venetia was strategically important to Austria; and that there was intangible prestige value to maintaining a position in Italy granted to Austria by the Vienna Treaties. But Elrod offers no solution to Austria's problems other than to observe that Vienna steadfastly hewed to the status quo at a time when others were aggrandizing and that Franz Joseph was no match for the revolutionary machinations of Napoleon and Bismarck. See, Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," op. cit., pp. 168-70.

crisis took shape. Prussia's motivated bias to conduct war and Austria's desperate attempt to break out of its isolation by lashing out at its tormentor will be elucidated as well. Despite quite a bit of diplomatic activity on the parts of France, Britain, and Russia to prevent the war, one comes away with the sense that this was little more than window dressing. As early as September 1865, diplomatic exchanges between France and Prussia revealed Bismarck's enticement that France should expand wherever French was spoken throughout the world.[20] One month later, the Prussian traveled to Biarritz and then to Paris to meet in secret with Napoleon. Although details of the conversations are murky, it is clear that the Prussian sounded out the emperor regarding support in a war against Austria. Prussian support for the French acquisition of Belgium was offered as compensation.[21] At this point, Napoleon was not tempted; the British caught wind of this offer and Cowley privately reiterated London's long-standing determination to Paris that French designs on Belgium would be a casus belli for Britain.[22] Nevertheless, the meetings reveal a good deal concerning the attitudes of both Bismarck and Napoleon toward risk. Both were sincere about some sort of alignment, but unlike the pact of Plombières between France

---

[20] Lefebvre letter to Drouyn, September 27, 1865, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 7 (Paris: Ficker [etc.] Imprimerie Nationale, 1910), p. 1590. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 158.
[21] E. Ann Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 29-31.
[22] Dotézac letter to Drouyn, September 27, 1865, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 7, op. cit., p. 92. Cited in Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, ibid., p. 31.

and Italy, this was not a plan for joint action for aggression. Rather, it was a plan to ensure that the other did not take up a hostile alliance against the other thus allowing for a free hand on both parts.[23] Bismarck wanted to make sure that Napoleon would not ally with Austria against Prussia, an option favored by Drouyn. Moreover, he wanted to bring Napoleon within his orbit by gauging whether the emperor would object to a Prusso-Italian alliance for the benefit of both. Since Napoleon fairly championed Italian unification (not without misgivings), it would be difficult for him to object to this arrangement. For his part, Napoleon wanted to break up any alliance between Austria and Prussia because he suspected that the latter was guaranteeing Venetia for the former. Bismarck stated that no guarantee had been given and Napoleon reciprocated by stating that a Franco-Austrian alliance was impossible—"he would not go and stand behind a target."[24] The issue of territorial compensations for both did not feature seriously in the conversations. Rather, both wanted to ensure the benevolent neutrality of the other.[25] Nevertheless, both statesmen would later cover their bets. As will later be shown, up until the last moment, Bismarck was ready to conduct an economic and territorial exchange with Austria (the Gablenz proposal), not in order to avoid a war, but in order to avoid a war in which Prussia was also opposed by France.

---

[23] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 158-59.
[24] Otto von Bismarck, Friedrich Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 5 (Paderbron, GE: Schöningh Verlag, [1924-35] 2004), p. 315. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 159.
[25] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 158-59.

The situation was considerably more complicated for France. Domestic politics were weighing heavily on the emperor's legitimacy. A poor harvest coupled with a pacifist populace made the army an easy target for budget cuts.[26] Opponents of the government in the corps législatif, headed by the now-pacifist Thiers, and Ollivier, were bent on trimming government expenditures. By 1865, Napoleon was propounding a series of cosmetic liberal reforms (the Liberal Empire) intended to pacify a restless public that was much disillusioned by his foreign policy fiascos and their domestic problems.[27] Thus, economic distress, popular demand for domestic reform, and a hostile corps législatif forced the emperor to become more risk averse for gain. Although the reductions amounted to less than 3% and were spread throughout the military with relative ease, the national mood did not augur well for an active military policy.[28] These factors, coupled with the anticipated British negative reaction, compelled Napoleon to turn down Bismarck's offer of Belgium. The unreality of taking Belgium right from under Britain's nose did not preclude Napoleon from being tempted by

---

[26] Egon Caesar, Count Corti, translated by Brian and Beatrix Lunn, The Reign of the House of Rothschild 1830-71 (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1928), p. 368.

[27] Napoleon wrote to Rouher, the minister of state, that he wanted "to give to the [government] institutions of the Empire their fullest possible development, and a fresh extension of public liberties, without compromising the power entrusted to him by the nation." Rouher, derisively referred by government opponents as the vice-emperor, opined that the "Liberal Empire meant no more to him than minor constitutional changes made by the legislature, without appeal to the nation; and he would do his best to see that they did not impugn the emperor's prerogatives" (René Arnaud, translated by E.F. Buckley, Second Republic and Napoleon III (New York: Putnam, 1930), p. 267).

[28] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., pp. 38-40.

future offers from Bismarck. Rather, it is precisely the pacifist nature of the French citizenry at the time that precluded Napoleon from aiding Bismarck's project of unification, even tacitly, unless the emperor received an important and tangible reward as compensation.[29] Thus, it was the risk averse, not the gain, aspect of the equation, respectively, that forced Napoleon to demand from Bismarck a sure compensation before he would publicly commit French arms to aid in German unification.

However, the military situation did not preclude an active diplomatic policy. The French emperor had two other options that he might pursue. Instead of a pro-Prussian alignment, he might align with Bavaria and the other lesser German states south of the Main. Known as the Third Germany option, this was always problematic due to the sheer number of governments and personalities to deal with, not to mention the problem of particularism, in which the various dynastic thrones could never agree to a common policy because of the requirement for unanimity voting.[30] But Bavaria now intimated that it would solve this collective action problem by exercising its leadership over a loose union of the small states. Thus, Napoleon would have someone with whom he could negotiate. But any effort on the part of France to involve itself in the German Question invariably drew hostile Prussian denouncements of French meddling. Thus, due to Prussian primacy, Napoleon feared that a forward policy

---

[29] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 70.
[30] Enno Kraehe, "Austria and the Problem of Reform in the German Confederation, 1851-1863," American Historical Review, vol. 56, no. 2 (January 1951), p. 277.

might force the lesser German states to bandwagon with Prussia against France. Therefore, the easier and relatively costless manner would be to curry favor with Prussia by deflecting Bavarian overtures for cooperation. It might also produce later favors to come on the part of Bismarck.[31]

This was not all. The third option, which Napoleon did pursue as well, was a benevolent neutrality agreement with Austria. Thus, the emperor might have it all. Bismarck saw that Napoleon favored a long, exhausting struggle between Prussia and Austria in which France might either collect with the winner or take his prizes in a Third Germany option that might also become French satellites.[32] France floated a loan to Austria at the same time that Bismarck petitioned to buy Holstein, thus putting Vienna in a stronger position to decline the Prussian.[33] Economic ties were enhanced between France and Austria and Napoleon had earlier offered to aid Austria in the destruction of Italian unity (the anti-Italian elements in Paris led by Drouyn and Eugénie proposed this idea) were it to relinquish Venetia.[34] Now, Nigra, the Italian

---

[31] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., pp. 40-41.
[32] Jean de Persigny, H. de Laire, Compte d'Espagny, ed., Mémoires, 3rd ed., (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit & cie, 1896), pp. 376-77. Cited in Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 33.
[33] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 46.
[34] Napoleon stated to Metternich, the Austrian ambassador to Paris, "what would suit me best would be a tripartite Italy; a kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia with Tuscany and Emilia [and joined to the Sardinian kingdom], a papal state with a lay government, and the kingdom of the Two Sicilies—the whole forming a confederation" (Metternich letter to Rechberg, June 30, 1861, Richard Blaas, ed., Il Problema Veneto e l'Europa, 1859-1866, vol. 1 (Venice: Instituto veneto di scienze, lettre ed arti, 1966), pp. 391-95). Cited in Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," op. cit., p. 159.

ambassador to Paris, concocted a plan by which Italy would receive Venetia while Austria would be recompensed with Romania (in February Couza, the prince of the Principalities was overthrown). Napoleon played a double game here. He knew that Austria would not part with Venetia unless forced to do so.[35] Thus, he instructed Nigra to press for a Prusso-Italian alliance in order to frighten the Austrians into capitulation.[36] Nevertheless, in this scheme the Austrians saw nothing but trouble with the Russians. One other possibility was to give Prussian-held Silesia to Austria in exchange for Venetia, but such an action would deal a severe blow to the Prussian monarchy and thus precipitate war.[37] Rechberg's earlier refusal to deal away Venetia is even more apt here: "[France was advising Austria] to go to war in order to lose a province."[38] Thus, the Austrian refusal to relinquish Venetia by sale to Italy (a plan also informally championed by Russell although unaware at the time of the impending Prusso-Italian overture), in short, the impossibility of separating the Italian, from the German, issues, respectively, left the French and the Austrians with little more than improved atmospherics. At this juncture the crisis had not reached the point of intensity when France would have to declare its fealty, so Napoleon's

---

[35] Alfonso La Marmora, translated by Gustave Niox and Ernest Descoubès, Un peu plus de Lumière (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1974), p. 136. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 160.
[36] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 160.
[37] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 77.
[38] Rechberg interview with Heinrich Friedjung in 1889 concerning events in 1863. See, Heinrich Freidjung, Der Kampf um die Vorlherrschaft in Deutschland, 1859-1866, 9th ed., vol. 2, app. 2, (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta, 1904), p. 584. Cited in Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," op. cit., p. 163.

diplomacy can be characterized as risk averse for gain but with enough feelers out so that he might profit in the role of tertius gaudens.

In Britain, Palmerston, although aged, died unexpectedly in October 1865 and he was succeeded by Russell as prime minister in a short-lived Whig government. Clarendon took over as foreign minister. Along with the queen, both statesmen were agreed that the opprobrium attached to Britain's inept handling of the 1864 war over the Duchies should not be repeated. In the estimation of the ministers, once the Duchies had been lost to Prussia, London did not deem their disposition to be a vital British interest worth contesting. Thus, military intervention was never in the cards.[39] Consequently, Clarendon was not taken in by foreign minister Mensdorff's appeal through Apponyi, Austrian ambassador to London, that strict British neutrality in the crisis abetted the Prussian aggressor. The Austrian foreign minister continued that repercussions would occur were Vienna to be defeated as she would then be unable to assist Britain in maintaining the status quo both in the Principalities and in the Ottoman Empire.[40] The British foreign minister replied that, because Britain's advice regarding the Duchies was refused two years ago, he could not

---

[39] Clarendon wrote to Cowley on May 12, 1866, "we are willing to do anything for the maintenance of peace except committing ourselves to a policy of action that we cd. not justify & wh. wd. not be sanctioned by public opinion at home" (Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University). Cited in Richard Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 8.

[40] Mensdorff letter to Apponyi, March 1, 1866, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 43/42. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 222-3.

be concerned over their disposition now and thus Britain would remain passive over Bismarck's plan to annex them,[41] although privately he was not unhappy that the Austrians were going to stand up to the Prussians.[42] Nevertheless, Clarendon instructed Loftus, British ambassador to Berlin, to communicate informally to Bismarck London's dismay at his pretensions—"But in the name of all that is rational, decent, humane what can be the justification of war on the part of Prussia. She cannot publicly plead her greed for territorial aggrandizement & she cannot with truth say that the administration of Holstein by the Austrian Authies has been of a kind to constitute a casus belli…"[43] However, the most that Clarendon would do was to instruct Loftus to informally ask Bismarck whether the quarrel might be referred to a neutral third party in accordance with the 1856 Paris Treaty.

Mensdorff simultaneously appealed to St. Petersburg for assistance but Gorchakov informed him that the tsar would not condemn Bismarck's policy of annexation, would not exert diplomatic pressure on Berlin, and would not decide

---

[41] Clarendon letter to Bloomfield, British ambassador to Vienna, March 7, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 224.
[42] Hammond, the under-secretary of foreign affairs, seconded Clarendon's feelings by stating "I confess I should like to see the Prussians well licked" (Hammond letter to Bloomfield, March 20, 1866, Public Records Office, Bloomfield Papers, 356/33). Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 8, fn. 3.
[43] Clarendon letter to Loftus, March 7, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 9.

which party was the aggressor.[44] But Gorchakov softened his stance by sounding out Britain as to its stance regarding Bismarck. The vice chancellor opined to Buchanan that "if Prussia had reason to fear that Austria would be supported by Great Britain, she would not attempt to realize her ambitious projects by violence."[45] But the British ambassador replied similarly as had Clarendon to Mensdorff that Britain's advice was rejected two years ago and that Britain reckoned that if she wished to defend Denmark, she would have to do it alone.[46]

Nevertheless, Britain softened as well. Russell was alarmed at the prospect of war in which he believed that Austria would be devastated by Prussia. This was a very prescient view inasmuch as most of Europe took it for granted that the Austrian army would prevail.[47] The prime minister believed that war could be avoided were the Oldenburg candidature promoted as the duke of both Duchies. This plan had possibilities insofar as it had enthusiastic support of Russia. Bismarck unenthusiastically accepted this plan. Austria would certainly have supported this illiberal candidate. Thus, Napoleon would have little choice but to accept this fait accompli in the face of British, Russian, Prussian, and Austrian endorsement. But Victoria lost any sense of realpolitik here because she

---

[44] Revertera, Austrian foreign minister, letter to Mensdorff, Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, 7 B. P.A. X/53, March 8, 1866. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 224.
[45] Buchanan letter to Clarendon, March 14, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 225.
[46] Buchanan letter to Clarendon, March 14, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 225.
[47] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 84.

vetoed the plan with the argument that the liberal duke of Augustenburg was the popular choice of the inhabitants of the Duchies. Thus, Russell dropped this promising plan and instead allowed Clarendon to continue with his option for third-party mediation.[48]

Prussian risk acceptance for gain.

On March 14, Franz Joseph was persuaded by his generals to mobilize a few regiments in order to protect the Bohemian defenses. This was the pretext that Bismarck was looking for and he exaggerated its import and publicly declared Vienna's warlike intentions.[49] Thus, Bismarck prevaricated regarding Clarendon's option of mediation because, "[in the minister-president's] opinion [as rendered by Loftus], there were no means of deciding the difference with Austria but by the sword, and the present was the most favorable opportunity for Prussia, an opportunity which might not again offer itself for a century."[50] Clarendon refuted Bismarck's claim by stating that "Austria neither wanted war nor was preparing for it."[51] Despite his penchant for circumscribing action with enough conditions so as to render it impossible, Clarendon had a deep understanding of Continental politics as well as of Bismarck's motives: "Count

---

[48] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 226-27.
[49] Clark, Franz Joseph and Bismarck: The Diplomacy of Austria before the War of 1866, op. cit., pp. 363, 562-63.
[50] Loftus letter to Clarendon, March 17, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 10.
[51] Clarendon letter to Loftus, March 24, 1866, cited in Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch, eds., Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy (1783-1919), vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), p. 5.

Bismarck was not an ordinary Minister, he exercised supreme power, he dictated the policy of Prussia which was territorial aggrandizement; he was a man of purpose and that which he announced he was likely to execute. War with Austria had become necessary for his position and his designs, and Austria was right in preparing to repel the blow that might at any moment be aimed at her by Prussia."[52]

At this point Wilhelm was not yet under the total sway of his minister-president. Loftus repeated Clarendon's option of mediation to which the king was well-disposed. Mensdorff publicly stated that Austria's intentions were peaceful and that Prussia was challenged to state the same. The 'Coburg intrigue' to which Bismarck derisively referred, was Mensdorff's effort to organize an array of diplomatic forces designed to appeal to Wilhelm's desire for peace.[53] Unfortunately, Bismarck ran interference and although his reply to Mensdorff was abrupt, the anti-Prussian Biegeleben, who served in the German branch of the Austrian foreign office, replied in a crude and threatening manner, thus wounding Wilhelm's amour-propre.[54]

---

[52] Clarendon letter to Loftus, April 4, 1866, cited in Ward and Gooch, eds., Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy (1783-1919), vol. 3, ibid., p. 5.
[53] Included were the duke of Coburg, Victoria, Queen Augusta of Prussia, the Prussian crown prince and princess, and the king's sister. The Prussian diplomats Goltz and Bernstorff, subordinates to Bismarck, were also convinced of the latter's folly and petitioned the king to stay at peace. See, Clark, Franz Joseph and Bismarck: The Diplomacy of Austria before the War of 1866, op. cit., pp. 363, 562-63.
[54] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 294-95.

Events moved quickly. As early as February 28, Prussian chief of the general staff, Moltke, argued in a crown council meeting that Italy would be an indispensable ally in any war against Austria. The council also agreed with Bismarck that French restraint ought to be cultivated with ambiguous assurances of benefits to come all the while refusing to enter into any firm commitments. The minister-president, much to the consternation of the conservatives, declared that all previous understandings with Austria to share hegemony in Germany were to be disposed of. Bismarck declared that "Prussia was the only viable political creation to have emerged from the ruins of the old German Reich. [This was the foundation of its legitimate claim] to take the lead in Germany. [Austria, on the other hand, had] always jealously opposed Prussia's natural and legitimate strivings in this direction by not allowing Prussia to assume control of Germany, although incapable of doing so itself."[55] By March 14, the Italians had been closeted with the Prussians over the details of an alliance in which the former would receive Venetia as compensation for their efforts. Dissatisfied with the terms of the Gastein Convention, La Marmora, the Italian prime minister, wanted to bind Bismarck more firmly to a timetable for war against Austria. But Bismarck kept his options open because he could not be sure of the French response and Wilhelm was not yet ready to prosecute war.[56] Thus, a not-so-very-secret treaty signed on April 8, 1866 that would expire at the end of three months obliged Italy to come to Prussia's aid in the event of war with Austria, but

[55] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 280-81.
[56] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 295.

Prussia was not obliged to reciprocate with assistance should the Austrians attack Italy. Still, this was a good deal for the Italians. Although the treaty did not guarantee them a war with Austria, it did guarantee them Venetia in the event of war. Napoleon informally advised the Italians to sign the pact and he even promised to protect them against the Austrians should the Prussians not do so.[57]

The signing had the odd effect of tying Napoleon's hands while freeing those of Bismarck. For three months Napoleon could not offer Italian neutrality to Austria in the event of war with Prussia at the cost of ceding Venetia, nor could he threaten Prussia if Austria offered to let him take territories west of the Rhine should Bismarck withhold this offer.[58] Once the Prusso-Italian treaty was signed, Napoleon was no longer in a position to forbid Bismarck to go to war with Austria and there is strong evidence that the minister-president was determined to do precisely that.

Unstable French preference reversal and then reversion to risk acceptance for gain.

Napoleon's anticipated negative regret began to manifest itself here. By the end of April he felt that he had lost control of the situation and thus called for a European congress in order to regain the initiative. Clarendon favored the idea, but the Cabinet vetoed it feeling that a separate appeal by Britain would be too

---

[57] La Marmora, translated by Niox and Descoubès, Un peu plus de Lumière, op. cit., pp. 139-41. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 161.
[58] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 161.

clear a manifestation to Prussia that France and itself were not agreed. Failing to see how a congress could solve the Venetian, and Duchies, problems, respectively, the British foreign minister again proposed that both France and Russia join with Britain in invoking the 1856 Paris Treaty in order to compel Prussia to return to the status quo. In turn, Napoleon and Drouyn vetoed this proposal contending that France could not sustain a rebuff from Prussia. However, the real reason for their negative position was the disposition of Venetia; the British appeal to the status quo position disallowed any formal cession of the province to Italy.[59] It was one thing to informally suggest the transfer, well another to publicly dispossess states of what they were lawfully granted by the Vienna Treaties. An ill-conceived speech by Napoleon at Auxere in the rural district of the Yonne, in which he derided the said treaties and envisioned the reclamation of the Rhineland territories, destroyed any common purpose that France and Britain might have attained in preventing Prussian aggression. This was clearly a pro-Prussian alignment as Berlin had now become the revisionist power in Europe with its support for German nationalism.[60] The most that Clarendon could do would be to order Italy to remain neutral and for the lesser German states to refrain from any actions that might provoke Prussia. The foreign minister was unaware at the time of the Prusso-Italian alliance for the purpose of aggression. Thus, not surprisingly, the Italians responded that it

[59] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
[60] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 118.

was impossible to stay neutral and they "must await the circumstances of fortune."[61]

Napoleon then proposed a preliminary conference in order to outline the agenda for a general conference to which Prussia, Austria, and Italy would be invited—"the question of the Elbe Duchies, the Italian dispute and the reforms to be introduced into the Federal Pact, so far as they may affect the Balance of Power in Europe"[62] were to be considered. Venetia would be on the agenda. All were agreed in the British government that the congress might be a French trap to commit London to the cession of Venetia to Italy.[63] Drouyn calmed British apprehensions by stating that the major powers would not have to bind themselves beforehand and retained full liberty of action in the event that there were differences of opinion at the conclusion of the congress.[64] Clarendon then agreed to a congress that he thought would do no good because the responsibility for a refusal outweighed the potential commitments incurred in acceding to the conference.[65] Russia began to warm to the idea as on April 9, one day after signing the treaty with Italy, Bismarck proposed again a motion in the

---

[61] Clarendon telegram to Cowley, May 8, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 19-20.
[62] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 468.
[63] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 20.
[64] Clarendon letter to Cowley, May 11, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 20.
[65] Clarendon letter to Cowley, June 14, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 21.

Confederation Diet for a German parliament based on universal male suffrage, a revolutionary move to which the tsar took extreme alarm.[66] Bismarck grudgingly accepted the offer of a conference; he did not want Prussia to be seen as the revisionist power intending to overthrow the status quo without attempting to assuage the objections of others. But Vienna accepted the congress proposal provided that no changes to the territorial status quo were allowed. This position rendered the congress useless to the French, while the British were relieved that the burden of failure would not be placed on them.[67] Austria was left looking like the power steadfastly resolved to refuse any reasonable compromises. Its position had the effect of relieving any anxiety that Bismarck might have had regarding possible third party interference in the war.[68]

Despite unsuccessful eleventh-hour attempts by Clarendon to employ Victoria to informally appeal to Wilhelm's good sense to fire Bismarck and to prevent a war "begun for mere objects of ambition, for imaginary affronts and wrongs"[69], the foreign minister salved his wounded sense of propriety by the prospect of an Austrian victory.[70] Clarendon was not alone in this thinking, but the motive for elation at this prospect on the part of the French was more risk

---

[66] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 293.
[67] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 21.
[68] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 296.
[69] Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 317.
[70] "What wd. please everybody in Europe wd. be that Italy got Venetia, Austria Silesia & Prussia a licking" (Clarendon letter to Cowley, May 12, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University). Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 22, fn. 4.

acceptant for gain than that of the British. Napoleon confided to Walewski that "war between Austria and Prussia is one of those unhoped-for happenings that never seemed likely to occur; and it is not for us to oppose warlike intentions which contain so many advantages for our policy."[71] The emperor, too, was blithely convinced that Austria would prevail against Prussia. But he wanted to make sure that Austria properly compensated him for his benevolent neutrality and by June 12, as war became inevitable, the Austrians promised to cede Venetia even if they were victorious.[72] This, of course, made an Austro-Italian war pointless. Nevertheless, if Prussia was beaten, Napoleon could take what he wanted west of the Rhine; if Prussia prevailed, he could demand that as well as price for his efforts. The Italian problem would largely be solved. But, as Thompson notes, "here [Napoleon] made his greatest blunder; for, expecting the first eventuality, he had made no preparations for dealing with the second."[73]

Why would Austria make such a poor deal with France? As the war neared, Mensdorff and Franz Joseph became convinced that France needed to be neutralized. Napoleon made the threat to Metternich, possibly idle,—"give me guarantees in Italy in case you win and I will leave you free in Germany…If not, I should be forced to arm in my turn and eventually to intervene."[74] But because

---

[71] Albert Sorel, Essais d'histoire et de critique (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library reprint, 1883), p. 243. Cited in J.M. Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 264.
[72] Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," op. cit., p. 166.
[73] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 264.
[74] Metternich letter to Mensdorff, May 23, 1866. Esterházy doubted "whether Napoleon's pistol was really loaded" (Hermann Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser

the Austrians were so risk acceptant for loss, procrastination had a price. Had they ceded Venetia in March, peace would have been assured with Italy. Now a much poorer deal was on the table. In retrospect, it is not clear that Austria would have prevailed in a war against Prussia singly, but it was the height of folly to believe that it could prevail in a two-front war as long as France and Russia were neutralized. Napoleon would no longer support Austria's acquisition of Silesia and he now demanded Belgium and the creation of a buffer state comprised of the lesser German states in the Rhineland. As Metternich noted, "Napoleon's knife was at Austria's throat."[75]

A minority viewpoint, which cannot be sustained, is that Bismarck's room for maneuver was significantly circumscribed by Napoleon's call for a congress. Gall argues that Bismarck rushed the war with Austria precisely in order to seize the initiative from Napoleon.[76] Nevertheless, the French emperor's hand was significantly weaker than Gall makes out. The calling of a congress was always Napoleon's fall-back position in order to see whether he could wheedle gains for France peaceably. That is why the rest of Europe largely mistrusted his diplomatic moves. It was odd to Clarendon that Napoleon would veto a British-

---

Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1926), pp. 120, 132). Cited in Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., pp. 135-37.

[75] Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 1, ibid., p. 247. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 302.

[76] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 285, 93.

initiated congress only to later initiate one of his own.[77] It turns out that the emperor's speech at Auxere was badly received throughout largely pacifist France.[78] The Rhineland aspect of the speech did not please Bismarck as well; in it he saw an attempt on the part of Napoleon to dissuade Prussia from war by making it too costly.[79] Thus the congress proposal was popular with the French people and a gambit by which Napoleon might be able to maintain himself in power. Gall also overstates the degree of Russian hostility towards Prussia. The tsar took alarm, as did most of Europe, at Bismarck's proposal for German universal male suffrage, but this was a ruse on the part of the minister-president. Bismarck had no intention of leaguing the non-propertied populace with the Prussian monarchy in order to govern; he just wanted to scare the middle-class

---

[77] Clarendon letter to Cowley, May 30, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 18.

[78] Lynn M. Case, French Opinion on War and Diplomacy during the Second Empire (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954), p. 200.

[79] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., pp. 126, 137-41. Napoleon was in earnest for a Franco-Prussian understanding and the Auxere speech was intended to signal precisely that. Bismarck took the bait and offered Napoleon a side-show proposal in which the Hungarians would conduct a diversionary attack on Austria in concert with the Prussian attack. Colonel Kiss, a Hungarian expatriate living in Paris, was the go-between for Bismarck. Napoleon backed a proposal by which France and Prussia would work to give Venetia to Italy and Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia in the event of a congress. If the congress failed or was never held, a triple alliance composed of France, Prussia, and Italy would conduct war against Austria. Thus, Italy would get Venetia, Prussia could reform the Confederation and annex territories comprising an additional eight million inhabitants, while France would get the Rhine provinces. Given the adverse response to the Auxere speech and the public nature of the Rhineland demand, Napoleon could accept no less as compensation for France's effort. But the last stipulation Bismarck vetoed, and thus, the Kiss mission demonstrably failed. See, Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 245-46.

liberal movement into making concessions to a royalist Constitution.[80] This position could easily have been intimated to the tsar.[81] Moreover, although he declined at the time, Bismarck's offer of Prussian aid in overturning the Black Sea clauses gave Alexander good incentive to refrain from opposing Prussian plans for war with Austria.[82]

It was well recognized that the Austrian military needed to mobilize well ahead of the Prussians. The Austrian military was traditionally organized, while the effect of Bismarck's army reforms, although taken notice by the rest of Europe, was underestimated. The superior firing power of the needle gun, the use of railheads to bring troops quickly to the front, and a reorganization of the army on mass lines, should have pointed to Prussian superiority over the Austrians.[83] The 'Young Turks' in the French military command urged these points upon Napoleon, but the conventional argument was that the Austrians had more men under arms than did the Prussians. Thus, a war of attrition would eventually favor Vienna.[84] Moreover, all of the major European powers suffered

---

[80] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 288.
[81] Instead, Bismarck later used the specter of socialism in the manner of a threat (unleashing a war of nationalities) should Russia oppose him. See, Heinrich von Sybel, Die Begründung des Deutschen Reiches durch William I. Vornehmlich nach den preussischen staatsacten, vol. 4 (Munich: R. Oldenburg, 1901), p. 389. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 247.
[82] C. W. Clark, "Prince Gorchakov and the Black Sea Question 1866," American Historical Review, vol. 48, no. 1 (October 1942), p. 54.
[83] Dennis Showalter, Railroads and Rifles: Soldiers, Technology, and the Unification of Germany (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1975), pp. 52-73, 105-39; —Wars of German Unification (New York: Arnold Publishers, 2004), pp. 139-46.
[84] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., pp. 82-103.

from a collective cognitive bias in believing that the future would be just like the past. According to Millman, "[Clarendon] like almost everyone else underestimated Prussia and Bismarck. He saw the danger to Britain's position from out of the past, and thus allowed Napoleon, and to a lesser degree, Alexander, to obscure the future."[85]

On April 20, Franz Joseph ordered mobilization along the Venetian frontier in response to reports of Italian military preparations. The reports were exaggerated; it was likely that Bismarck was the source of this dissembling. But King Victor Emmanuel made the rumors reality by openly mobilizing the entire Italian army.[86] The Austrian monarch deemed war inevitable at this point. In turn, Wilhelm was indignant and responded by ordering mobilization of the Prussian army on May 3. Earlier, throughout April, the Gablenz brothers shuttled back and forth between Berlin and Vienna in an attempt to find a diplomatic solution that would avoid war.[87] Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman approvingly cite Crankschaw's observation that "there was a moment when it looked as though Austria might be ready to sell Holstein to Prussia, as she had sold Lauenburg. Bleichröder was active in raising funds for this; Bismarck was ready for it… Had Austria got rid of Holstein for cash and then sold Venetia to

---

[85] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 24.
[86] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 296-97.
[87] The Gablenz brothers could objectively assess the situation. Both belonged to a family of imperial knights. Ludwig was the Austrian proconsul in Holstein while Anton was a Prussian landowner and Landtag deputy. See, Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 297.

Italy, which she could also have done at this time, the face of history would have been changed. For Bismarck would have had no excuse to go to war and no Italian ally if he did so."[88] These transactions comprised the Gablenz proposal. Thus, Germany would be divided at the Main with Berlin militarily commanding the north and Vienna commanding the south. Austria could expect Prussian assistance in protecting her trans-Alpine territories against both France and Italy.

Franz Joseph would only accede to this proposal were he to find support among one or two of the lesser German states. Since he could not find such support, the proposal became stillborn. Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman rely on this thin evidence to make the argument that the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian War turned on a rational choice calculus without delving into the strategic context in which Bismarck acceded to the proposal. The Prussian continued to play a double game here. Military mobilization continued apace even as he intended to demonstrate to the rest of Europe his willingness to work for a diplomatic solution. Thus it would be hard for France and Russia to intervene at a late date and Bismarck had diplomatically worked hard to ensure that they did not do so.[89] On the eve of the war, Victoria's remembrance of Clarendon's comments to her are characteristic of the mood at the time—"Europe was in a most combustible state and there was great danger of our being isolated, he thought, and God knows how long we should be able to keep out of it. Belgium

---

[88] Edward Crankshaw, Bismarck (London: Macmillan, 1981), pp. 197, 200; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives, op. cit., p. 228.
[89] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 297.

we were bound to defend."[90] The foreign minister was convinced that neither threats, nor remonstrances, nor joint action with France, nor a naval demonstration, could prevent this inevitable war.[91] As demonstrated, all of the major European powers had motivated biases to abstain from intervening and last minute efforts, such as the Gablenz proposal, merely gave them diplomatic cover for their inaction. More to the point, it is hard to believe that the minister-president would have been satisfied with this territorial transaction; it is more likely that he would have found another later pretext in order to prosecute war against Austria in order to expel it from Germany.

On May 9, at the behest of Saxony, the Confederation Diet in Frankfurt agreed to demand that Prussia explain its mobilization. Three weeks later Austria forced the issue by declining the invitation to the congress and, instead, putting the future of the Duchies in the hands of the Diet. This was tantamount to a declaration of war as Berlin was forced to defy the Diet, thus providing the mechanism by which Confederation forces could be mobilized. Bismarck responded publicly by issuing a circular to the rest of Europe that "we can see nothing in this action by the Austrian government except a deliberate, direct provocation and a desire to force a rupture of relations and war."[92] On June 9, Prussian troops invaded Holstein, but the Austrian troops refrained from

---

[90] Victoria's notes of a conversation with Clarendon, May 8, 1866. Cited in Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 325-26.
[91] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., pp. 468-69.
[92] Bismarck, Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 5, op. cit., p. 524. Cited in Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 297.

engaging them. A Prussian motion of federal reform aimed at excluding Austria from the Confederation and dividing supremacy between Prussia and Bavaria failed to carry. But the motion formally contained Prussia's demand for the Duchies, thus informally declaring war on Austria. Vienna responded on June 11 by obtaining the Diet's assent for the mobilization of the Confederation's non-Prussian army in order to protect the "internal security of Germany and the threatened rights of its confederate members."[93] Von Savigny, the Prussian envoy to the Diet, declared with a statement prepared well in advance that the federal treaty, having been breached, had now lapsed, and that his job was at an end.[94] In order to clarify the war front, Bismarck threatened Hanover, Saxony, and the electorate of Hesse to declare their neutrality and to adhere to the reform plan put forth by Prussia. When they refused, Prussia invaded and overran them and the war began in earnest because the Diet authorized military assistance to its threatened members.[95]

The Austrians defeated the Italians in the south at Custozza on June 24, but the war was all but over by July 3 as the Austrians were routed by the Prussians between Sadowa and Könningrätz in Bohemia in which the largest number of troops were engaged in pitched battle since the Napoleonic Wars. Franz Joseph appealed to Napoleon to intervene and the latter asked the

---

[93] Ernst Rudolf Huber, ed., Dokumente zur deutschen Verfassungs-geschichte, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1961), p. 204. Cited in Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 297.
[94] Huber, ed., Dokumente zur deutschen Verfassungs-geschichte, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 206. Cited in Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 297.
[95] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 297-98.

aggressors to agree to an armistice the next day. Both Wilhelm, and Victor Emmanuel resented his interference. The former wanted to annihilate Austria by invading Vienna, the latter wanted to attain Venetia through conquest, not as a gift.[96] Even Bismarck was heard to mutter on July 5 that "in a few years' time Louis will probably be sorry he took sides against us like this; it may cost him dearly."[97] Thus both aggressors concerted with each other to maintain hostilities in mopping up operations by obfuscating communications with Napoleon and deliberately providing misleading information regarding the war theaters. Bismarck advised the Italians to reject the armistice proposal until he was certain that Napoleon would sanction all of his war aims.[98] Nevertheless, having dissolved the Confederation and ejected Austria from Germany, Bismarck achieved his objective and he convinced Wilhelm to give Vienna easy peace terms, much to the anger of Moltke and the Prussian army.

Risk aversion for gain followed quickly on the heels of Prussia's astounding military success. The threat of French intervention wasn't Bismarck's only reason for treating with Austria. The lasting hostility by Austria "must not

---

[96] France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 10, op. cit., p. 323. Cited in Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 265.
[97] Robert von Keudell, Fürst und Fürstin Bismarck, Erinnerungen von 1846 bis 1972 (Berlin: W. Spemann, 1902), p. 295. Cited in Erich Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1964), p. 129.
[98] France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 10, op. cit., p. 374. Cited in Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 164.

be allowed to become an organic fault in Prussian foreign policy."[99] Thus, the minister-president later reminisced that "my two greatest difficulties were first to get King Wilhelm into Bohemia and then to get him out again."[100] As early as July 9, 1866 he had written to his wife Johanna, "provided we are not excessive in our demands and do not think that we have conquered the world, we shall also achieve a worthwhile peace. But we are as quickly carried away as we are cast down, and I have the thankless task of pouring water into the bubbling wine and pointing out that we are not the only inhabitants of Europe, but live in it with three other powers that detest us and envy us."[101]

British non-involvement.

In seven short weeks the distribution of power in Europe had materially changed. Yet both Britain and France did not initially realize its import. Britain was self-deterred from intervening; Russell's government made a desperate attempt to sever the connection between domestic politics and foreign policy. It did so because it was intent on passing the Second Reform bill and thus did not want to alienate support for this measure by intervening abroad either diplomatically or militarily. Nevertheless, the Whig government fell over defeat of that bill and the Tories took over with Derby as prime minister in a minority

---

[99] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 314.
[100] Bismarck, Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 9, op. cit., p. 157. Cited in Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 301.
[101] Bismarck, Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 14, op. cit., p. 717. Cited in Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 312.

government with Stanley, his son, as foreign minister.[102] The conservatives were even more anxious than the liberals to avoid intervention in Continental politics. Disraeli made the fatuous claim that "the abstention of England from any unnecessary interference in the affairs of Europe is the consequence, not of her decline in power, but of her increased strength."[103] That strength, of course, was derived from becoming a wealthy trading state. As Kennedy argues, "there was probably no other period, before or since, when so many members of the British establishment were imbued with the doctrines of political economy; and an intense dislike of the destructive processes of war was, of course, one of the fundamentals of that faith."[104] A French observer keenly stated of Britain "there was a time when they interfered with everything and they have finished by not wishing to interfere with anything."[105]

As early as July 4, alarmed that Bismarck intended to dispose of dynastic privilege, the tsar proposed a congress to settle the conflict by insisting that the overthrow of the Confederation was an illegal act in the absence of sanction by the Vienna Treaties signatories. When Stanley forebore to respond to him this attitude was abandoned and he accepted the Prussian aggression as a fait

---

[102] A watered-down Reform Bill, derisively referred to as Tory Democracy, ultimately passed under the threat of street riots.
[103] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, vol. clx, pp. 1271-73, 1290.
[104] Paul M. Kennedy, The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914 (London: Ashfield Press, 1980), p. 17.
[105] Revue des deux mondes, vol. lxiv (July 1, 1866), p. 248.

accompli to be tolerated.[106] In response to a plea on the part of Austria for British intervention, the foreign minister remarked to Apponyi "the danger of disturbance to the peace of Europe lay in the weakness rather than the strength of Germany."[107] Thus, the foreign minister finally responded to the tsar's entreaty in the House of Commons on July 20 by declaring, "ours will be a pacific policy, a policy of observation rather than action. I think there never was a great European war in which the direct national interests of England were less concerned…If North Germany is to become a single great power, I do not see that any English interest is in the least degree affected."[108] But Stanley's policy of strict non-intervention later brought Clarendon's indictment that "I begged him however not to proclaim our determined inaction on every opportunity that arises—the policy of our not meddling is of course the right one but it is not necessary that all mankind shd. be let into the secret twice a day."[109] Thus, although willing to support an armistice at the behest of Drouyn for the sake of peace, Stanley would not further entangle Britain should Prussia protest. Moreover, he turned down Mensdorff's request for British intervention as a

---

[106] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 239-40.
[107] Stanley letter to Bloomfield, July 21, 1866, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 11, op. cit., pp. 147-48. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 33.
[108] Hansard, op. cit., vol. clxxxiv, p. 1245.
[109] Clarendon letter to Cowley, July 14, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 32.

mediator as he questioned its success.[110] Morier's acute analysis of the geopolitics associated with the war, while essentially correct, reveals more than a bit of wishful thinking:

> "The heartbreaking part of this war is that its aims, as regards the anti-Prussian portion of it, are so thoroughly legitimate, while the means used are so thoroughly damnable. The presence of Austria in Germany and Italy is the fatal bar in the way of progress, first for Austria, second for Germany, third for Italy. I am myself convinced this might have been effected by peaceful means and by the mere natural course of liberal development. Bismarck has determined it otherwise. He has had recourse to a brutal surgical operation to effect what, I am convinced, might have been done by diet and steady training. But heartily as I hate the operation, I must wish for its success. A signal victory on the part of Austria in the present struggle would throw Europe back three generations….[Because of her strength, Prussia could assert her predominance] with instead of against the liberal and national forces of Germany."[111]

As keen an observer of German politics as Morier was, he fundamentally still did not understand that Bismarck was willing to use any and all forces (even revolutionary) at his disposal in order to conduct a revolution from above. Liberalism was merely co-opted for his purposes.[112]

Continued French risk acceptance for gain.

It was at this point that British diplomacy largely absented itself only to return when it was learned that Napoleon had asked for compensations from the Prussians. Aside from the background factor of political economy pointed out by Kennedy, two other immediate factors were responsible for British self-

---

[110] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 33.
[111] Rosslyn Wemyss, Life of Sir Robert Morier, vol. 2 (London: E. Arnold, 1911), pp. 68, 72.
[112] Craig, Germany: 1866-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 14.

deterrence. The first had to do with the disposition of Italy. Should Austria have prevailed against Prussia it would then turn on and destroy Italian unification. Thus, Bismarck largely neutralized both Britain and France from intervening with his masterstroke of an alliance with Italy.

The second factor, not surprisingly, was British distrust of Napoleon's motives. The emperor was deeply apprehensive about the Prussian military victory. What did he think he was getting by supporting Prussian nationalism through benevolent neutrality? Napoleon naively believed that a small compact state in North Germany would be akin to a unified Italy, a satellite perhaps, but posing no greater threat than that.[113] But the attendant reality was quite different. Cowley reported that "the emperor is getting alarmed at his Frankenstein."[114] Nevertheless, Napoleon was irresolute, not from debilitating illness as has been argued,[115] but from an irrational continued flirtation with risk acceptance for gain. Eugénie was more rational than her husband; her quip that "I shall go to bed French and I shall wake up Prussian,"[116] was not far off the mark. Napoleon might have gracefully accepted the Prussian victory but made clear to Bismarck that no new territorial annexations would be tolerated. Or he might have provided military support for Austria in order to defeat Prussia although doing

---

[113] Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 155.
[114] Cowley letter to Clarendon, July 3, 1866, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., p. 155.
[115] Pottinger does a good job of refuting these earlier claims. See, Pottinger, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866, op. cit., pp. 190-92.
[116] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, The Culture of Defeat (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001), p. 122.

so before Sadowa would have made the task much easier than after. But he took the disastrous third way by asking Bismarck for compensations after the fact, a policy derisively referred to at the time as la politique des pourboires (the politics of an innkeeper's account). The second and third options will be examined in turn.

On July 5, a council of ministers meeting was hurriedly called at Saint-Cloud. Franz Joseph had already ceded Venetia and accepted French mediation. Drouyn proposed a military demonstration on the Rhine; thus, France might engage in armed mediation. In response to a query by Eugénie, Randon, the minister of war, stated that 80,000 troops could be dispatched immediately with the total reaching 250,000 in about three weeks. La Valette, minister of the interior, argued, as did the British, that to support Austria was to lose support for Italian unification. Moreover, he blithely believed that Bismarck could be trusted to give the compensations that he had vaguely promised. Again, Eugénie was realistically correct in arguing that Bismarck would now forget his promises should the French not threaten him.[117] The council resolved to ask the legislature to authorize general mobilization of the army including a demonstration of 50,000 troops on the Rhine immediately and a diplomatic threat that France would not allow Prussia to unilaterally make territorial changes without the consent of Europe. The details were to have been published in the Moniteur the next day, but they never appeared because Napoleon countermanded the

[117] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., pp. 265-66.

order.[118] Bismarck later admitted in the Reichstag that the appearance of even 15,000 troops on the Rhine would have led to an anti-Prussian uprising in South Germany, the reinforcement of the Austrian army in Bohemia by forces drawn from Italy, and a Prussian withdrawal of troops in order to defend Berlin.[119] At the start of the war Wilhelm had to withdraw practically all of his troops from garrisons in Trèves, Luxembourg, and Saarlouis in order to fortify his army, thus, Bismarck's admission is likely correct.[120] But here, Napoleon raised the secondary to the essential by arguing that his restraint demonstrated to Europe (in particular Britain) that his intentions were peaceful.[121] He was likely also deterred by the possibility of Bismarck unleashing a war of nationalities. The argument is odd in that La Valette used the potential repudiation of the doctrine of national self-determination on the part of Napoleon as the catalyst for arousing the German nation. Bismarck played on this fear and he instructed Goltz, Prussian ambassador to Paris, to counter French threats by invoking "a national uprising in Germany [on the basis of the Frankfurt constitution of 1849. Prussia would use] every means, regardless of party standpoint, [to excite national resistance.] Progressives and democrats [were ready] for every sacrifice

---

[118] Maurice Paléologue, Entretiens de l'impératrice Eugénie (Paris: Plon, 1928), p. 117; Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 38, 213, 285, 328. Cited in Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 266; Case, French Opinion on War and Diplomacy during the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 458.
[119] Paléologue, Entretiens, op. cit., p. 124. Cited in Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 266; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 167.
[120] Bismarck was amazed that Napoleon did not take his compensations here.
[121] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 266.

in a war against France. [Prussia would bring about] the complete ignition of the national spirit."[122] Contemporaneously, Bismarck, as communicated to Gorchakov, made a similar threat to invoke a nationalist uprising on the basis of the Frankfurt constitution should the tsar fail to accept his peace terms outright. The national ambitions of the Poles would be incited. [123]

It took little time for Napoleon to rue his mistake, but he decided, instead, to send his diplomat Benedetti to visit Bismarck on July 23 with hat in hand. Benedetti was instructed to sound out the Prussian as to the possibility of restoring the French frontiers of 1814 with the addition of Luxembourg. Shortly thereafter, Napoleon asked Goltz whether Prussia would consent to the cession

---

[122] Bismarck, Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 6, op. cit., pp. 45, 55. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 312.
[123] von Sybel, Die Begründung des Deutschen Reiches, vol. 4, op. cit., p. 389; Bismarck, Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 6, op. cit., no. 515. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 313. Bismarck's threats both to France and Russia stand Goddard's legitimation theory on its head. First, the minister-president did not indicate that he was willing to abide by established international norms through the naked threat of the use of force. Second, while Napoleon had nationalist proclivities, Alexander certainly did not. Thus, while the emperor may have been rhetorically trapped by Bismarck's framing of expansion in a manner that deprived the opposing state of grounds for resistance, the tsar certainly was not. Finally, while Bismarck appealed to Napoleon's ontological security through a common attempt to secure Prussia's identity in international politics, he accomplished precisely the opposite with the tsar. To wit, Napoleon was alone in celebrating Bismarck's proposal for universal male suffrage—"henceforth the two countries would pay homage to the same political system" (cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 308). But it is ironic that Bismarck would use nationalism as a cudgel, rather than as tool to appeal to a common ontological security, in order to bring Napoleon to heel. These criticisms are fair because Goddard argues that legitimation theory precepts were used in Bismarck's wars of unification that she does not examine. See, Stacie E. Goddard, "When Right Makes Might: How Prussia Overturned the European Balance of Power," International Security, vol. 33, no. 3 (Winter 2008/09), pp. 110-142.

of Landau and Luxembourg in order to gain a defensive cordon. Drouyn drew up a memorandum suggesting the establishment of a neutral buffer state that comprised provinces west of the Rhine. Benedetti was then instructed to ask Berlin for the cession of Landau, Saarbrücken and Luxembourg and a secret treaty entitling France to annex Belgium but leaving Antwerp as a free city in order to meet British objections.[124] Goltz revealed to Paris the impossibility of ceding German land, but that France might take Belgium and thus it would be important that Prussia not oppose this move.[125] Bismarck, in turn, would not consider the frontier of 1814 as long as the inhabitants did not evince a desire for change. Prussia had no interest in Luxembourg, but France would have to sound out the Dutch on its own and could not compensate the latter with German territories. A secret convention regarding Belgium would be recommended to Wilhelm, notwithstanding anticipated British objections. On August 20, Goltz advocated a Prusso-French alliance in order that Prussia might have a free hand in South Germany.[126] Bismarck then played a masterly game while Benedetti committed a grave diplomatic error by writing out in detail these revisionist demands asking for Belgium and Luxembourg, but abandoning the 1814 frontiers. Bismarck turned him down but pocketed the handwritten demands

---

[124] Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 83. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 475.
[125] Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 84. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 475.
[126] Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 93. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 476.

and publicly produced them on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War in order to shock public opinion in Europe, especially in Britain.

Contemporaneously, Britain caught wind of Napoleon's overtures and the emperor was forced to reassure Cowley that France was not seeking to annex Belgium.[127] Nevertheless, Stanley believed that war was imminent between France and Prussia—"if the emperor gives way [on compensation], this new defeat, following the Mexican failure, and shortly to be followed by a surrender of Rome, which I assume to be inevitable, will be the most serious shock his dynasty has yet undergone. If he does not give way, it is war. We do not want Napoleon upset, nor do we want a new war."[128] Napoleon appeared to reverse preference by dismissing Drouyn as evidence of goodwill towards Prussia and appointing Moustier as foreign minister. On September 16, La Valette issued a circular to Europe that came as a relief to Britain. Surprisingly, Napoleon backed down from his demand for compensation from Prussia and he covered this failure by proclaiming France's "splendid situation in Europe 'governed by the principle of liberty of alliances,' and enjoying an equilibrium due to satisfied nationality."[129]

---

[127] F.A. Wellesley, ed., Secrets of the Second Empire, private letters from the Paris Embassy: selections from the papers of H.R.C.W. Cowley (New York: Harper, 1929), p. 306.
[128] Stanley letter to Cowley, August 15, 1866, Public Record Office, London, Cowley Papers, 519/182. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 249.
[129] Pierre de La Gorce, Historire de la Seconde République, vol. 5 (Paris: Plon, 1904), p. 74. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 477.

The peace treaties between Prussia and Austria were signed at Nikolsburg on July 26 and at Prague on August 23. In addition to ejecting Austria from Germany and dissolving the Confederation, Prussia attained both Duchies with the vague promise that Schleswigers would be allowed a future referendum in order to determine whether they wanted to be a province of Denmark or of Germany. Saxony was allowed to maintain its nominal sovereignty, but Prussia could federalize its military in time of need. The dispositions of both the Duchies and Saxony were a sop to Napoleon's pride at having been able to influence the peace terms. Prussia later annexed Hanover, Hesse-Kassel, Nassau, and the city of Frankfurt. Austria paid a small war indemnity, while Frankfurt, as the seat of the Confederation, paid a large indemnity as punishment for its perfidy towards Prussia.

Bismarck was the beneficiary of Napoleon's failed policy of asking for compensation after the fact. The Prussian was able to use this evidence of French greed to draw the disillusioned lesser German states into his orbit. Had Napoleon accepted Prussian military success without objection and allowed a consolidated Germany north of the River Main, it would have suited his purposes. This is because the German Confederation, designed by the Vienna Treaties precisely to contain France, would be dissolved and the lesser German states would retain their independence and thus, along with Austria, provide a counter to Prussia in Europe. As it turned out, Bismarck was able to secure offensive/defensive treaties with the lesser German states, and also to expand

economic relations through the Zollverein, thus, in effect, able to bring Third Germany within the Prussian camp four years later prior to the war with France. The La Valette circular was intended to assuage quixotic French public opinion that was alternatively pacifist and nervously annexationist. Prior to the outbreak of the war, Napoleon thought he had anticipated every contingency by securing benevolent neutrality agreements with all participants. The long, drawn out struggle that he anticipated did not materialize. Thus, the Prussians threatened to quickly turn on the French, even by drawing the defeated Austrians into alliance, should Napoleon persist in demanding compensation.[130] What looked promising to France prior to the clash of military forces turned into a major diplomatic defeat for Napoleon and the legitimacy of his rule after the fact. Revenge crept into the emperor's mind and, as will later be demonstrated, as the diplomacy prior to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War took shape, it took little for Bismarck to goad Napoleon into precipitating a fight.

Conclusion: The dynamics of asymmetric affective abandonment.

How does a rational choice explanation fare regarding this case study? Lalman and Bueno de Mesquita argue that the Austro-Prussian War turned on an expected utility calculus on the parts of the participants. Without adducing any evidence, they observe in passing that whether Bismarck was relentless in his

[130] Herman von Petersdorff et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vol. 5 (Berlin: Otto Stolberg, 1923-33), pp. 106-11. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 313.

pursuit of German unification is somewhat controversial.[131] We should not be surprised that scholars largely unsympathetic to Bismarck, such as Pflanze, believe this not to be the case. But even more sympathetic scholars, such as Gall, disagree as well. The Prussian's famous observation that "if revolution there is to be, let us rather undertake it than undergo it"[132] was clearly self-serving in that no one other than himself was contemplating it. On the one hand, a stubbornly conscientious monarch coupled with a recalcitrant legislature put up serious obstacles to Bismarck's prosecuting war against Austria. But the Junker's task was made a good deal easier, on the other hand, by a watchful Europe that either wanted nothing to do with the crisis (Britain), or wanted to profit from the crisis by doing nothing as well (France). Austria, for its part, had a motivated bias to maintain its endowments in Germany and Italy without taking a realistic measure of the changing strategic landscape in Europe. If much of Europe suffered from a cognitive bias in believing that France and Russia were still the great disturbers in Europe and thus a unified North Germany would promote peace and stability, Austria was keenly aware that a unified Prussia was dangerous. Apponyi argued to Stanley that neither France nor Russia would long tolerate a power as ambitious as Prussia.[133] But Austria also believed that

---

[131] Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives, op. cit., p. 277.
[132] Bismarck, Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 6, op. cit., p. 120. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 313.
[133] Apponyi comment to Stanley, revealed in Stanley letter to Bloomfield, July 21, 1866, Public Record Office, London, Cowley Papers, 519/181. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 242-43.

Italian unification would reverse itself and die out, thus bringing the rest of Europe to reassert the status quo established by the Vienna Treaties.[134] Franz Joseph was right about Prussia, but wrong about Italy. He had to separate both issues and make a concession on one, but he stubbornly held onto both endowments and merely hoped for the best. It was important for Austria to make terms with Italy before Prussia concluded an alliance with the latter. Such an agreement would likely have required Austria to cede Rome as well in order to keep the Italian military off of its southern flank. Prussia did not highly rate the Italian military, but Moltke believed its presence to be an essential diversion of Austrian troops. Thus, with the Italians neutralized, the Austrian army could concentrate on the northern flank, fulfilling one of the aspects that Bismarck admitted would have forced his hand to desist from attacking. But Austria played into Prussian hands by turning its insurance premium into a risky lottery ticket rather than by making necessary territorial concessions. By using the insurance premium in conservative fashion, Austria would have then forced Prussia to do the same by withdrawing its forces in order to defend Berlin. Austria, in short, was irrationally risk acceptant for loss to a degree unwarranted by the strategic situation and this irrationality further strengthened Bismarck's motivated bias to believe that he could get away with his kleindeutsch unification plans.

---

[134] Elrod, "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," op. cit., p. 152.

Britain used the insurance premium in risky fashion while France converted it into a risky lottery ticket. Acrimony over failed mutual support in the earlier Polish Uprising and the war over the Duchies made it almost impossible that the two would work together to suppress Prussian aggression. But singly each might have made a difference. We can never be sure whether Gorchakov was correct in arguing that British support for Austria would have stayed Bismarck's hand. But if Bismarck is to be believed, Napoleon's support of Austria before Sadowa would have been effective in deterring Prussia. After the fact, both Britain and France were neutralized by the Italian alliance with Prussia. But they need not have been earlier. Britain demonstrated a penchant for formalism unwarranted by the situation. What was the point of Britain informally championing the Austrian cession of Venetia to Italy, but then failing to consider it formally, especially when Stanley later advised Gorchakov that the Vienna Treaties had repeatedly been broken and that he was indifferent to supporting them?[135] One could say that Britain hoisted itself on its own petard, but then an active diplomatic or military policy was never in the offing considering the non-interventionist attitude of both the people and government. Both Russell and Stanley had little interest in using the government's good offices to mediate the Austro-Prussian dispute. This is why they relied so heavily on Victoria to employ interpersonal back-channels to implore Wilhelm to adopt a

[135] Stanley letter to Buchanan, August 8, 1866, Foreign Office 181/444, no. 29. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 245-46.

policy of peace and to dismiss Bismarck. The failure of such efforts could not then be pinned on the government. Moreover, her irrational protest against Russell's plan to support the Oldenburg candidature as duke of both Duchies could have been overridden. Palmerston had circumvented her opinion when it suited his purposes; thus, Russell might have done the same. That the latter did not press more strongly for his proposal indicates how little interested he was in intervening in the dispute. Russell's preoccupation with passing the Second Reform bill and not in alienating domestic support was a factor in his reticence to committing British prestige to mediating Continental problems. But this was a losing game for not only did his government fall, but British influence in Europe then became a non-factor in Bismarck's calculations. If Russell also attempted to repair his reputation as an ineffectual meddler, Stanley was even less successful in promoting British influence through his policy of strict non-intervention. Stanley argued that to accede to a congress would merely sanction Prussian aggression after the fact and that the major European powers could best maintain their influence and independence of action by withholding support for Prussian aggression.[136] This implied that the freedom of independence of action was important because judicious action would actually be forthcoming, not merely a cover for British self-deterrence.

---

[136] Stanley letter to Buchanan, August 8, 1866, Foreign Office 181/444, no. 29. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 245-46.

Napoleon handled himself most poorly during this crisis. Thus it is no surprise that Britain would not work with him. For the emperor the insurance premium could be used in conservative fashion, either by accepting Prussian aggression but indicating that further aggression would not be tolerated, or by supporting Austria militarily in order to deter Prussia. Instead, Napoleon was self-deterred believing that his benevolent neutrality would be rewarded handsomely by a grateful Bismarck. But no one pays for services that can be had for free. It was here that the insurance premium was converted into a risky lottery ticket. This is because Napoleon's impulse to ingratiate himself with Bismarck in anticipation of future favors to come as well as his belief that the Prussian would increasingly become more dependent on French benevolent neutrality led him to believe that he could demand greater and greater compensations as the war dragged on. The lightning-quick Prussian military success at Sadowa greatly alarmed the emperor, but only a fleeting, and quickly reversed, preference reversal for opposing Prussia manifested itself. The third option of asking for compensations allowed Bismarck to reveal Napoleon's greed to the rest of Europe and destroyed any goodwill that both Britain and the lesser German states might have had for the French.

Russian diplomacy was largely absent throughout the conflict. Bismarck alternatively threatened Alexander with unleashing a war of nationalities, on the one hand, or of failing to support a revision of the Black Sea clauses, on the other hand, should the tsar oppose the Prussian. Britain was the only state whom

Alexander would work with in order to deter Prussia, but the tsar wanted London to do all of the work in supporting Austria. Again, the certainty principle is relevant here in that singly, or in combination, the major European powers could have deterred Bismarck from prosecuting war against Austria for the time being. Austro-British, Russo-British, or Franco-British combinations might have been sufficient. But mutual distrust and a poorly imagined vision of a compact unified North Germany that would stabilize Europe drew support away from working together to keep the peace.

Chapter 7: Asymmetric affective abandonment: Bismarck's wars of unification: The Franco-Prussian War (1870).

Motivated biases on the parts of both Napoleon and Bismarck to restore the prestige of their respective states after overextending themselves resulted in a war that poisoned Franco-Prussian relations for the next seventy years. Napoleon's foreign policy reversed course after the conciliatory Daru was replaced by the incompetent prussophobic Gramont, who, spoiling for a Franco-Austrian alliance in order to undo previous Prussian gains prosecuted a war against Prussia. France scored a decisive diplomatic victory over Prussia when Wilhelm agreed to withdraw a plan to put a Prussian prince on the Spanish throne (such a move would have placed a Prussian and a Prussian-friendly, government on either side of France). But Gramont refused to be satisfied and thus overplayed his hand by attempting to force a gratuitous humiliation on Prussia. Bismarck, in turn, extricated himself from his foreign policy blunder by thwarting the peaceful intentions of his sovereign by using diplomatic chicanery (the edited Ems telegram) that forced Napoleon into a position of either fighting or suffering the loss of his dynasty. This was a false choice only by Gramont's ill-conceived motivated bias to rouse formerly indifferent French public opinion to make it believe that satisfaction had to be given to salve its artificially wounded amour-propre. The essential dynamics of affective abandonment were at play during this crisis and war, including the mistaken belief of Bismarck that Napoleon was self-deterred through a series of crises in which the emperor repeatedly failed to gain his objectives. Thus, the Franco-Prussian War is again a

crucial case study whose falsification would largely deny the validity of the theoretical dynamics proposed.

Beust, the anti-Prussian Austrian foreign minister, pointed up the diplomatic absurdity of the final crisis leading to war by asking, "when I look at what is happening I ask myself whether I have become an imbecile?"[1] This was a war that certainly was not inevitable and should never have been fought, but there were no major powers willing to prevent it. Even after the shocking success in consolidating North Germany after the Austrian defeat in 1866, Napoleon's France was still regarded as the likely disturber of the peace on the Continent. Thus, though the remaining major European powers did not want a Franco-Prussian war, it was not disturbing to them and they blindly believed that its outcome (again, mistakenly underrating Prussia's chances) would not materially change the balance of power on the Continent. This essential insight was obscured by the existence of an imbalanced international system that Mosse characterizes as one in which the major powers were in a state of "diplomatic disorientation."[2] Mosse argues that a re-grouping of the powers (France and Austria versus Russia and Prussia with Britain abstaining) resulted with a resurgence of the Eastern Question, a dynamic largely missing during the

---

[1] Beust letter to Metternich, July 11, 1870, Hermann Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 3 (Stüttgart: Deutschen verlags-anstalt, 1926), p. 423. Cited in David Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), p. 177.

[2] Werner E. Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 253.

Austro-Prussian War. But in reality, both France and Prussia were left isolated to face each other. Russia and Austria tacitly agreed to let the antagonists fight it out alone. To borrow Taylor's formulation, the Eastern Question provided crises that simply would not boil.[3] Thus, the western and eastern issues could not be joined so that France could gain an ally in Europe against Prussia. Prussia also failed to gain an ally, but it did not need one. Bismarck was rightly confident that Prussia would prevail in a war against France.

To demonstrate these conclusions I present a discussion of the imbalanced international system in which eastern and western issues could not be joined. Then I examine a series of crises generated and gambits by Napoleon in a desperate attempt to restore prestige to his governance. Special attention will be paid to the effect that these risk acceptant attempts to recover lost prestige have on the motivated biases of the relevant decision-makers on both the French and Prussian sides to prevail in the diplomatic showdown known as the Hohenzollern candidature for the Spanish throne, which ultimately resulted in war.

After the conclusion of the Austro-Prussian War, each of the major powers found itself in relative isolation. The defeated Austria had no friends in Europe, and Prussia aroused considerable suspicions as to her aggressive designs. Tsar Alexander criticized Bismarck's annexation of the North German states, while his own efforts to Russianize his Polish territories showed him to be a hypocrite.

---

[3] The reference is to A.J.P. Taylor, "Crimea: The War that Would Not Boil," in Taylor, Rumours of War (London: H. Hamilton, 1952), pp. 30-40.

Prussia had no reliable ally; Bismarck's secret incipient offensive/defensive treaties with the lesser German states south of the Main at the time were rather a guarantee against Austria than a move to informally incorporate them.[4] French public opinion was inflamed by the obvious failure of Napoleon to secure any territorial success as it became obvious that Sadowa was as much a French failure as an Austrian one. Britain had appeared to withdraw entirely from Continental affairs. At the urging of Bismarck, Austria attempted to expand eastwards and was busy incorporating Hungary into its multiethnic empire. This brought Austria into conflict with Russia over the western Balkans. After years of self-imposed isolation, Russia was beginning to recover its strength and thus decided to use its newfound diplomatic influence to encourage Cretan insurgents to rebel against Turkish rule. Greece wished to annex Crete and Russia supported this objective because it also encouraged pan-Slavism in the Balkans. The installation of a new ruler in Bucharest and a Serbo-Turkish dispute added to instability in the Ottoman Empire and fostered a renewed belief that its days were numbered.[5]

Crete.

At the end of August 1866, Alexander cast about for allies with respect to the Cretan situation. Together with Britain and France, Russia brought the Greek state into being and continued to guarantee it after 1830. Gorchakov sought a

---

[4] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 171, fn. 1.
[5] Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., pp. 253, 256.

joint remonstrance against Turkey backed by Russian warships. But France temporized; Tallyrand, the new ambassador to St. Petersburg, told him that the sultan was installing a new governor in Crete and thus they should wait to see if the situation improved. Stanley followed Paris's lead. Britain was heavily preoccupied with its own problems including Irish Disestablishment and the Irish Land Bill as well as its attempts to prevent American-backed Fenian raids into British Canada. Resolving the Alabama claims regarding British culpability during the American Civil War, the introduction of a new reform bill, and preoccupation with defending Belgium competed for the foreign minister's attention to the problems of Crete. Crete was strategically important to the British Empire because it lay along the Egyptian route to India. But Stanley, more than any British foreign minister of his time, advocated strict non-intervention so as to husband his resources. Nevertheless, he mimicked France's diplomatic moves in this instance because he feared that British isolation in the Near East through a Franco-Russian rapprochement might lead to Russian support for French designs on Luxembourg and Belgium.[6]

To complicate matters, Beust's appointment as Austrian foreign minister alarmed Alexander because he feared a Franco-Austrian rapprochement with respect to Turkey. Moreover, a Pole was selected by Franz Joseph as governor of Galicia, a direct snub to Russia. Nevertheless, cordiality seemed to prevail when

[6] Cowley letter to Stanley, March 25, 1867, Foreign Office 27/1659, no. 59. Cited in Richard Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 62.

Werther informed Gorchakov that Austria would seek no influence in the Principalities in the case of a Turkish collapse, if Russia would recognize the former's interests in the western Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovinia).[7] The only fly in the ointment, as Beust explained in conversation with Werther, was that Russia intended to maintain a monopoly with respect to the protection of the Christians in Turkey. Alexander wanted quick results and he had little interest in promoting reforms that protected Christians and Moslems alike.[8] Unsure of French and Austrian support, Alexander turned to Prussia and toned down his criticism of Bismarck's policies. But the tsar had to petition the Austrians and the French again because word came that the Christians would rebel against the Turks in the Balkans the following spring. Beust saw the possibility of overturning the Paris treaty of 1856 in a European congress and informed the French that the Black Sea clauses might be lifted in order to secure the cooperation of Russia. Moustier, the new ambassador to Constantinople, balked at this suggestion;[9] he feared too close a rapprochement between Austria and Russia at France's expense. Austria and Russia fell out, as expected, over the latter's lack of interest in promoting reform throughout the Ottoman Empire.

---

[7] Revertera letter to Beust, November 7, 1866, Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, no. 30c. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 255.
[8] Werther letter to Bismarck, December 10, 1866, Erich Brandenburg, Otto Hoetzsch, and Hermann Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 3, (Oldenburg: Historischen Reichskommission, 1938), p. 208. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 256.
[9] Britain objected as well. See, Stanley letter to Fane, January 30, 1867, Foreign Office 146/1288, no. 90. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 61.

When Alexander returned to bilateral discussions with France, Moustier proposed that both states should urge the sultan to abandon the Serbian fortresses and cede Crete in order to enlarge the frontiers of Greece. In return, Moustier expected Russia to support France in its vaguely defined western claims. Napoleon was secretly trying to gain Luxembourg from Holland and had consequent designs on Belgium, and he did not want to show his hand to Russia (or Britain). France agreed to work with Russia with respect to the Ottoman Empire because it thought that it was securing Turkey's interests despite the cession of Crete even though Russia believed that this was a prelude to the Ottoman Empire's dissolution. Gorchakov's lack of interest in demanding reforms revealed this and thus brought the discussions to an end. Gorchakov turned again to Prussia for support on the Cretan issue, but Reuss, the representative of the North German Confederation, explained that it would have to defer to the wishes of its western neighbors. Napoleon's designs on Luxembourg were generally known by the 1st of April 1867, and Alexander would not support the French, since Bismarck had begun obstructing Napoleon's designs. Gorchakov thus failed to secure western support on Crete and the eastern and western issues could not be joined for mutual benefit.

The Luxembourg Crisis.

As early as August 1866, Napoleon tried to placate Bismarck by dropping his demands on German territory and instead sought the latter's acquiescence in France's annexing Luxembourg. French public opinion was aroused over the

new North German Confederation and it was feared that this was merely a prelude to crossing the Main and incorporating the south German states. Napoleon attempted to appease public opinion in order to recuperate his prestige; and to gain a measure of territorial security. Luxembourg presented itself as a possible acquisition because the Austro-Prussian War had dissolved the German Confederation. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was the King of Holland's personal possession as a consequence of the Vienna treaties of 1815. But since that time it had also been a member of the German Confederation and, since 1842, a member of the Zollverein. A significant Prussian army garrison was stationed there. When Belgium acquired its independence from Holland in 1830, a portion of Luxembourg continued to be held by the Dutch, but the grand duchy was regulated by the treaties of 1839 that guaranteed Belgium's independence and restored the peace between Holland and Belgium. Since the German Confederation had been dissolved and the inhabitants of Luxembourg expressed no interest in joining the North German Confederation, the cash-strapped William III, king of Holland wished to rid himself of this portion of Luxembourg and petitioned France to take it off his hands.[10]

Benedetti was dispatched to sound out Bismarck on the subject. Bismarck was characteristically evasive though favorably disposed. The French ambassador was instructed to raise the subject of Belgium as well and offered a Franco-Prussian offensive alliance for the profit of both. Napoleon would have

---

[10] Erich Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1964), p. 154.

no objection to Prussia's taking over the lesser German states if Bismarck would aid France in acquiring Luxembourg and, eventually, Belgium. Although admitting that Luxembourg did not wish to join Germany, the newly appointed chancellor of the North German Confederation would not aid the French in taking it over. The negotiations dragged on from November 1866 until February 1867. Bismarck's advice to Napoleon was "commit yourself. Present Europe and the king of Prussia with a fait accompli."[11] Napoleon had not given up on the idea of friendship with Prussia; in this regard he was out of step with much of French opinion. But the emperor failed to realize the extent to which France had lost influence and power. France needed Prussia as an ally, but Prussia did not need France. Against whom did Prussia need protection? A Franco-German alliance would alienate Britain over Belgium and Russia over Poland. Moreover, Prussia's stake in Poland made it unwilling to break with Russia. Had Russia taken alarm at Prussian gains Bismarck might have entertained the proffered alliance, but St. Petersburg had not. This was because Russia could more easily make gains in the Near East should Prussia pin France down in the west. And Prussia could make gains beyond the Rhine in a war with France but a Prussian war with Russia offered nothing but losses.[12] Although Bismarck was careful not to commit himself in writing, the upshot of the Franco-Prussian discussions

---

[11] Benedetti letter to Moustier, December 20, 1866, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 13 (Paris: Ficker [etc.] Imprimerie Nationale, 1910), no. 3949. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 178.
[12] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 188.

amounted to the following: If the Prussians removed their garrison from Luxembourg, the fortress had to be dismantled. Thus, Napoleon was given the impression that Prussia would acquiesce in his designs but that he must act on his own; that the offer of an offensive alliance had been rebuffed; and that Luxembourg could not be used by France as a bastion to threaten Germany.[13]

On February 28, 1867, Moustier was ready to guarantee Limburg (largely Dutch) and Holland against Prussia in exchange for Luxembourg, but William III would not complete the transaction unless Wilhelm assented. This is because Bismarck frightened the Dutch king by publicly denying that there had been any discussions about renouncing Luxembourg and Limburg. His decision to publish at this time the offensive/defensive treaties made with the lesser German states at the conclusion of the Austro-Prussian War was a thinly-veiled threat to overthrow the Prague treaty and thus incorporate the rest of Germany. Europe had been somewhat assuaged by Austria's exclusion from Germany and the north and the south remaining separate but now this was in jeopardy. Bismarck went a step further and on April 1 arranged an interpellation with himself and Bennigsen, the National Liberal party leader in the North German parliament. The latter had delivered a violent harangue against Germany's ceding any of its territory to France. Bismarck revealed the Luxembourg discussions because the king of Holland publicly notified the Prussian of the discussions, thus putting an end to the pretense that Prussia had nothing to do with them. Bismarck then

---

[13] Robert W. Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), pp. 480-81.

unconvincingly denied that Luxembourg had been the subject of discussions between Prussia and France, thus leaving Napoleon embarrassed and feeling that he had been cheated. The king of Holland retreated and the transaction was left uncompleted. Moreover, Bismarck declared that the signatories to the 1839 treaty would have to be consulted. Public opinion in both France and Prussia became aroused and warlike. Goltz, the Prussian ambassador, informed Napoleon that the German people would rather go to war against France than cede Luxembourg to it.[14]

Britain was not unaware of these proceedings; it had poor current information and was plagued by the fact that reports of a Franco-Prussian alliance were almost always in circulation. Nevertheless, Disraeli put his finger on the risk acceptant for loss dynamics at play: "the emperor is like a gambler who has lost half his fortune & restless to recover; likely to make a coup, which may be fatally final for himself."[15] However, it was Bismarck who first approached the British to intercede and use their good offices. Bernstorff requested that Britain petition the Dutch to withdraw its offer to sell Luxembourg. And indeed, what was the position of Britain with regard to the status of Luxembourg? It was the opinion of the Prussians that the status of

---

[14] Goltz letter to Bismarck, April 2, 1867, Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 8, op. cit., p. 569. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 65.

[15] Disraeli letter to Stanley, December 30, 1866, George Buckle and William F. Monypenny, Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, vol. 4 (London: Macmillan Co., 1910-20), p. 469.

Luxembourg should be considered in the context of the scope of the 1839 guarantees for Belgium. Stanley refused to see the connection and told Bernstorff so.[16] By April 3, Bismarck had conveyed to Stanley that war between Prussia and France could not be avoided and asked if Britain would side with Prussia. Stanley replied that Britain would take no part in this personal quarrel and that armed intervention on behalf of either side was out of the question. Derby agreed with Victoria that firm and unequivocal language should be directed to both Napoleon and Bismarck. Moreover, she wrote to Wilhelm and stressed the responsibility that he would incur should war occur over Luxembourg. Stanley agreed with this approach but also stated that "there never was a time when England's public opinion was more thoroughly bent on incurring no fresh responsibilities for Continental objects."[17]

Both Austria and Russia jumped into the fray. Beust was heavily involved in incorporating the Habsburg monarchy on a dualist basis and thus gave Prussia a free hand to threaten the basis of the Prague treaty. Nevertheless, a Bavarian intermediary proposed a Prusso-Austrian alliance but the foreign minister would not consider this and thus he tilted more towards France than Prussia.[18] It is noteworthy that towards the end of the crisis Gramont proposed

---

[16] Bernstorff letter to Bismarck, April 3, 1867, Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 8, op. cit., pp. 575-76. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 66.
[17] Arthur C. Benson and Viscount Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1908), p. 423.
[18] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 482.

an offensive/defensive treaty by which France would gain the left bank of the Rhine while Austria would acquire Silesia from Prussia as well as supremacy over the lesser German states. Beust turned down the French proposal because Slavs, Hungarians, and Germans in the Austrian Empire would object to it.[19] Austria was willing to tolerate French gains on the Rhine only as the consequence of a war against Russia in the Balkans.[20] To further illustrate the unwillingness of states to coordinate their policies in the different theaters, Beust reversed the Austrian policy of supporting Turkey and instead sought to organize the western powers in a common effort to support the Balkan Christians, support that would thus have competed with that of Russia. He reasoned that Berlin would have no choice but to support an isolated Russia, its only reliable ally. Hungarians would enthusiastically support a war in the Balkans; Austro-Germans would be sympathetic as well. As the consequence of such realignments due to an eastern war, Austria would gain its chance to take revenge against Prussia for its earlier defeat.[21] But Gramont shrank back from

---

[19] Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 435-36.
[20] Beust letter to Metternich, Austrian ambassador to Paris, April 27, 1867, Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 338, 362-65. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, ibid., p. 436.
[21] Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 3, op. cit., pp. 60-61, 68-70. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, ibid., p. 436.

Beust's conditions because France was not interested in becoming an enemy of Russia.[22]

Russia, for its part was more aggressive in rejecting French pretensions. Moustier asked Gorchakov to ask Berlin to make concessions in order to break the deadlock. In response, the vice chancellor upbraided Talleyrand, the former stating of the "terrible extremity" in which Bismarck was likely to be placed given his loss of popularity in Germany and the threat of a great war.[23] Napoleon was clearly grasping at straws. Gorchakov stated that Napoleon had a chance to express together with the tsar, displeasure over Bismarck's dispossessing the various petty German dynasties at the conclusion of the previous war: "…the circular of M. de La Valette admitted M. Bismarck to be right, and now six months later you go back upon the approval which you had accorded him."[24] Nevertheless, Gorchakov intimated that he would be more sympathetic to France's position regarding Luxembourg were the French to give him relief on the Black Sea clauses. Still, this was not an alliance against Prussia.[25] Rather, it was a weak attempt to join the eastern and western issues for mutual gain. But

---

[22] Lothar Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, volume 1, 1851-1871 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), p. 338.
[23] Francois Charles-Roux, Alexandre II, Gorchakoff et Napoleon III (Paris: Plon, 1913), p. 424. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 482.
[24] Charles-Roux, Alexandre II, Gorchakoff et Napoleon III, op. cit., p. 424. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 482.
[25] Talleyrand letter to Moustier, April 18, 1867, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 15, op. cit., no. 4736. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 181.

neither side was willing to offer much more than to engage in studied silence regarding the matter.

Bismarck petitioned his preferred allies, but strictly in order to keep them constrained. He had in mind a resurrection of the Holy Alliance (what would later become the League of the Three Emperors), but it didn't materialize because of incompatibilities between the interests of Prussia, Austria, and Russia.[26] Alexander took the initiative and offered to put 100,000 troops on the Austrian border in case of a Franco-Prussian war. Wilhelm was to reciprocate by ensuring that Austria never took over Bosnia and Herzegovinia in the Balkans. Moreover, Prussia was to support an end to the neutralization of the Black Sea.[27] But Bismarck had no interest in Near Eastern affairs and he would not side with Russia against Austria. After all, it was Bismarck who encouraged the Austrians to expand eastward in order to eliminate any motive for revanche in Germany. He also did not want to have to defend the Habsburg Empire militarily. If an Austro-Russian war broke out in the Balkans, Bismarck would station troops on the French, not the Austrian, border. He was sure that Austria would not move without French support.[28] Thus, if the three conservative states could mutually guarantee each other's possessions at no cost, Bismarck might continue to unify

---

[26] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., pp. 182-83.
[27] Reuss letter to Bismarck, April 1, 1867, Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 8, op. cit., no. 380. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 182.
[28] Herman von Petersdorff et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vol. 6a (Berlin: Otto Stolberg, 1923-33), p. 321. These negotiations that began in 1867 were not solidified until spring 1868. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 438.

Germany without outside interference. But Russia would not renounce its Balkan ambitions, something which Austria naturally mistrusted. Gorchakov would not guarantee Austria's integrity and even forbade a defensive alliance between Prussia and Austria.[29] Rather, he wanted an alliance with Prussia that included France in order to bring Russia gains in the Near East.[30] Thus, Russia would not side with Prussia against France and Prussia would not side with Austria against Russia. The major powers continued their relative diplomatic isolation and attempts to balance the international system through a regrouping of the powers could not be achieved. Nevertheless, there was an element of design in all of this. Bismarck was largely able to dissociate eastern, from western, issues, respectively. His insistence on the existence of two threatening powers to an ally, rather than just one, meant that an Austro-Russian clash in the Balkans need not necessarily involve western powers nor would a Franco-Prussian war necessarily involve eastern powers. Ultimately, Bismarck required that allies merely 'hold the ring' against encroachment by third parties in order to let the two combatants fight it out alone.[31]

Again, Napoleon realized that he had overextended himself and he then petitioned the British to help him out. On April 6, Napoleon complained to

---

[29] Reuss letter to Bismarck, April 17, 1867, Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 8, op. cit., no. 502. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 183.
[30] Reuss letter to Bismarck, April 22, 1867, Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 8, op. cit., no. 521. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 183.
[31] Thus, the Franco-Prussian War did not become general unlike that of the First World War.

Cowley that Bismarck "had played him false [but that] he was most desirous to maintain the peace of Europe and if the Great Powers could prevail on Prussia to give him satisfaction, or suggest any mode of settling this question, he would be only too glad to adopt it."[32] The emperor had in mind that Luxembourg should be made over to the grand duke while Prussia withdrew its garrison from the fortress. The independence of Luxembourg would be guaranteed by the great powers. Both Alexander and Gorchakov pressed for moderation on the part of Berlin. By April 26, they were able to propose a London conference to settle the issue and they knew Bismarck would agree.[33] The Prussian saw the importance of a collective guarantee given by the other major European powers to Luxembourg. From May 7-11, Stanley headed a conference and the Luxembourg crisis was defused. The king of Holland continued to own the grand duchy, but it was neutralized under a collective guarantee of the great powers. Luxembourg remained a member of the Zollverein; Prussia withdrew its military and the fortress was demolished. Limburg was incorporated by Holland. A nonsensical debate took place in the House of Commons regarding the distinction between a 'collective', and a 'several', guarantee, respectively. A 'several guarantee' obliged each signatory to defend its charge, individually, if necessary. A 'collective guarantee' imposed no such restriction and a state was not required to

---

[32] Cowley letter to Stanley, April 7, 1867, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 71/53. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 265.

[33] Charles-Roux, Alexandre II, Gorchakoff et Napoleon III, op. cit., p. 430. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 482.

discharge its obligations unless all other parties did likewise. British legal reasoning saw that Luxembourg fell under a collective guarantee, while Belgium fell under a several guarantee. Bismarck was rebuffed at the conference in his request to put both Luxembourg and Belgium under an identical guarantee. Moreover, he was angered to find out the hollowness of the British interpretation of the collective guarantee, although Granville noted that it "was so utterly free from danger, that it is difficult to understand the importance which Prussia attaches to it."[34] But as Eyck notes, "there is good reason to believe that [Bismarck] knew beforehand that Britain would undertake the guarantee only in this very limited sense, and that he accepted it in order to be able to close the affair."[35]

It is unlikely that Bismarck originally intended to set a trap for Napoleon here. Else, why would he not just attack France in the rear as it moved into Luxembourg and then Belgium?[36] Rather, Bismarck likely overestimated his ability to offer a concession that would satisfy France while going over the head of German public opinion. Napoleon's vague soundings with the Prussian regarding territorial designs had been the former's stock-in-trade for years. But Bismarck was significantly preoccupied with Prussia's digesting the gains made from the previous war and he needed to goad the constituent Reichstag into action. Critical debates on ministerial responsibility, remuneration of deputies,

---

[34] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, vol. clxxxviii, pp. 967-77.
[35] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 156.
[36] Moltke advocated just such an option. See, Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 336.

the budget, which largely involved the military, were flagging. The constitution for the new North German Confederation had yet to be adopted.[37] Thus, he improvised as the Luxembourg crisis was reaching its high point. It is less ironic than cynical that Bismarck would intervene to whip up German sentiment (colluding with Bennigsen beforehand to conduct an interpellation) in order to get himself out of a foreign policy dilemma largely of his own making. On the one hand, discredit would be brought upon Prussia should it fail to remain the guarantor of German nationalism wherever it existed. On the other hand, without external pressure, Bismarck's credibility with Paris would be jeopardized were he found to be a setter of diplomatic traps.[38] Thus, he fobbed off responsibility for the Luxembourg decision on aroused German public opinion. The influence of Prussian military success on national public opinion was beginning to create a juggernaut that Bismarck increasingly found he could not ignore, and it was to become the strongest weapon in his hand in the future.[39] It could be argued that both France and Prussia were employing the endowment effect and insurance premium in conservative fashion. Both sides envisioned trading bits of territory in order to satisfy each other's security needs. It is

---

[37] Pflanze argues that Bismarck exploited the Luxembourg imbroglio in order to raise nationalist hackles and thus speed the adoption of his constitution in the Reichstag. See, Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 378.
[38] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 336.
[39] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 156. The Austro-Prussian War is regarded as the last 18th century-style cabinet war, that is, a governmental war decided upon in total disregard of national public opinion. See, Paul W. Schroeder, "The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure," World Politics, vol. 39, no. 1 (October 1986), p. 7.

obvious that this was not their endowment to barter with. But even the king of Holland was a willing, if not a nervous, trader. Nor was Stanley averse to Napoleon's acquiring Luxembourg if it could reduce the emperor's insecurity about the stability of his rule.[40] The annexation of Luxembourg is a transaction that should have been made from the standpoint of using the insurance premium in conservative fashion. In the end, both sides made concessions and the problem was peaceably resolved with the intervention of third powers. But it is shocking to learn that Napoleon decided against war with Prussia in this instance because Niel, his new minister of war, stated that the military would not be ready to fight for the next eight months.[41] For his part, Bismarck considered war and proclaimed the dangerous doctrine that "if a nation feels that its honour has been violated, then this honour has in fact been violated, and action has to be taken accordingly."[42] Nevertheless, he acted cautiously because he could not get the lesser German states on board.[43] The casus belli for the activation of their treaties apparently had not been met. The real reason is that a number of the southern German states were becoming less enchanted with the prospect of German unification. There was foot-dragging on the part of the various states, in

---

[40] Stanley letter to Grey, April 7, 1867, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 71/40. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 265.
[41] Cowley letter to Stanley, April 7, 1867, Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, 71/53. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 265.
[42] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 155.
[43] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 156; Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 336.

particular Bavaria and Württemburg, in implementing the military treaties with Prussia. To a large degree, the lesser German states could not ignore the economic benefits associated with their inclusion in the Zollverein, but political unification was stalling if not reversing. This was due to resistance to Prussian efforts to establish uniformity in military practices, increase the costs which had to be borne by the states, the introduction of more rigid military disciplinary codes, and an increase in the lengths of military service.[44] It is safe to argue that both France and Prussia were not eager to go to war with one another at this time and thus were willing to be restrained by others after earlier overextending themselves.

Other Napoleonic failures to include the proposal for a Triple Alliance, the Belgian Railways Dispute, the Liberal Empire, and the proposal for disarmament.

Conventional wisdom has it that after the Luxembourg crisis, Bismarck began to realize that war with France was becoming inevitable.[45] In reality, Bismarck held the mistaken belief that Napoleon would not fight and was therefore becoming self-deterred. This hypothesis has to be qualified somewhat, however. Bismarck had known since 1855 that Napoleon would always back down in the end. The emperor was a noted procrastinator; the step from deliberation to action was

---

[44] Gordon A. Craig, Germany: 1866-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 18.

[45] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 335; Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 160; J.M. Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 269.

always difficult for him.[46] The failure of the French to support the Austrians in the previous war because Napoleon countermanded his own orders was evidence for this belief. Nevertheless, Bismarck also knew that Napoleon was not always firmly in charge of foreign policy, much less of his own administration, and the war party, which included the empress, Rouher, la Guéronnière (the ambassador to Belgium), and Gramont could always potentially hijack French policy. Moreover, after the Luxembourg crisis, Europe was on edge to the degree that any small incident might be magnified out of all proportion and lead to war. Both Niel, in France, and Moltke, in Germany, were engaged in a competitive arms race equipping massive standing armies. This was a race that only Prussia could really afford to run. Thus, France always found itself in a position where it would need a head start on mobilization if it was to have any chance of meeting Prussia on equivalent terms on the battlefield. To that one must add Napoleon's insecurity about his own regime. As Lyons, British ambassador to Paris, noted, that while the emperor might not admit that he was afraid of Prussia, he could not deny that he was afraid of France.[47]

Also, a series of foreign policy failures which can only be summarized here, put France in a state of high anxiety. Maximilian I of Mexico, the emperor's brother, was executed at Queretaro by the revolutionary Mexican government in June 1867. French troops protecting him had to be withdrawn after Napoleon

---

[46] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 158.
[47] Lord Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy (London: E. Arnold, 1913), p. 142.

wasted 360 million francs on this imperial misadventure. By November of that year, Napoleon was also forced to reestablish a French garrison to defend the Pope after defeating Garibaldi's forces at Mentana. At Mentana, the emperor claimed to see a Prussian plot to undercut him.[48] France had expended much blood and treasure to bring about Italian independence. Thus it was embarrassing to hear Rouher fulminate in the corps législatif that "Italy shall never possess herself of Rome" in order to retain support of the clerics in France.[49]

After the Luxembourg crisis, Napoleon tried to establish a Triple alliance of France, Austria, and Italy directed against Prussia and he erroneously believed, at the opening of the Franco-Prussian War, that the alliance was "morally signed" and thus in effect.[50] Maximilian's death was an occasion for Franz Joseph and Napoleon to meet at Salzburg. Negotiations for a Triple alliance began with France and Austria in July 1868 and were joined by Italy in December of that year. They went on until October 1869. Napoleon had in mind an offensive alliance but Beust rebuffed Gramont at every turn. An alliance with a foreign power would alienate the Germans upon whose support Austria needed to restore its influence in Europe. If Napoleon had in mind to attract the

---

[48] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 129.
[49] Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 485.
[50] Beust letter toVitzthum, Austrian ambassador to Belgium, 26 August 1869, Oncken, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vol. 3, op. cit., no. 741. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 174.

lesser German states, nothing could undercut that objective more than to make Prussia popular again by threatening it. But both Austria and France were worried that the other might come to terms with Prussia to their respective detriment. Thus, although no treaty was signed, an exchange of letters of good intentions on the parts of both sovereigns is known to have taken place. Napoleon stated that if Austria was attacked, France would come to its aid. Moreover, France would not negotiate with another foreign power without first consulting Austria. There is no record of Franz Joseph's letter, but Beust's records indicate that the Austrian did not go that far. There was no promise of assistance in case France was attacked and certainly none if France was the aggressor. Victor Emanuel promised nothing unless Rome was evacuated beforehand, which Napoleon found himself unable to do.[51] The emperor deluded himself into believing that this foreign policy failure was in fact a success. (Thus, on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War, Napoleon was without an ally, but he blithely presumed that Austria and Italy would aid him in prosecuting war against Prussia, and they might have if his forces had not been devastated so quickly.) He also believed that Niel's army reforms (they were ineffective because they were only cosmetic and did not come close to competing with

[51] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., pp. 161-62.

Moltke's reserve system) had put France in a good position to "fac[e] the future without fear."[52]

The Belgian Railways Dispute.

It is against this background that the Belgian Railways dispute took place. It was peaceably resolved but la Valette, newly appointed French foreign minister, unwarrantedly saw a Prussian intrigue here[53] and Britain believed that France intended to annex Belgium by stealthy means.[54] Bismarck unwarrantedly believed that fear of Prussia deterred Napoleon from taking Belgium.[55] He further believed that the Liberal Empire was a consequence of Prussian deterrence and that the appointment of Daru as foreign minister was further proof that Napoleon had reversed course and had now taken a conciliatory attitude toward Prussian unification.

In early 1868, two Belgian rail lines chartered by the Belgian government, the Grand Luxembourg, and the Liégeois-Limbourgeois, were heavily in debt. In October of that year, both companies opened negotiations to be taken over by a large French concern, the Chemin de Fer de l'Est. An excited Belgian government refused to allow this commercial transaction to proceed, seeing policy

---

[52] This was Napoleon's catch-phrase after claiming victory in the 1869 plebiscite for his continued rule. See, René Arnaud, translated by E.F. Buckley, Second Republic and Napoleon III (New York: Putnam, 1930), p. 290.
[53] Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., pp. 213-14.
[54] Clarendon letter to Lyons, March 13, 1889, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 298.
[55] Craig, "Great Britain and the Belgian Railways Dispute of 1869," American Historical Review, vol. 50, no. 4 (July 1945), pp. 738-61.

implications in national security in tolerating foreign control of a resource that would be needed in time of war. This was particularly the case with France which, since 1866, had continually been rumored to have designs on Belgium. Thus, the Belgians petitioned the British to intervene and rushed through legislation that forbade any such takeovers. Stanley resented the Belgian petition. He felt that the right of refusal claimed was correct, but that the Belgians had to take that step and then perhaps ask the British to intervene should they not like France's response.[56] It is noteworthy that, in this context, as if to put a legal stamp on Britain's non-intervention, in March 1868 the House of Commons deleted from the Mutiny Bill traditional reference to preserving the balance of power in Europe as a prime reason for the existence of the British army.[57] Thus, Belgium was not likely to get much help from Britain. As the negotiations dragged on, Clarendon, who replaced Stanley in 1868 as foreign minister in a liberal Gladstone government, became annoyed that the Belgian government did not prevent the transaction simply by buying the railway companies outright instead of claiming a right of veto, the latter a move that was surely provocative to France.[58]

---

[56] Stanley letter to Disraeli, September 25, 1868, cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 123.
[57] Craig, "Great Britain and the Belgian Railways Dispute of 1869," American Historical Review, op. cit., p. 741.
[58] Clarendon letter to Bloomfield, February 23, 1869, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 130.

France did not dispute Belgium's right to forbid the transaction; it merely believed that the latter's handling of the affair was clumsy and discourteous.[59] But Napoleon also saw in the acquisition of the Belgian railways an opportunity to restore his image with his countrymen. Thus, he hoped that by threatening war he could obtain the rail lines, stating, "it is necessary to act as if [war] will arise."[60] He also wrote to Niel asking about the possibility of war, but this is not evidence that he intended to go to war with Belgium.[61] Rather, it was the excited state of tension between France and Prussia that led France to see Belgium's response as the result of Prussian connivance, even as Napoleon's risk acceptance for gain contributed to the anxiety.[62]

Clarendon, who was both a Francophile and knew Napoleon well, was able to see through these conflicting motivations. He observed that "if the emperor attaches value to the English alliance, he ought not to sacrifice it by a sneaking attempt to incorporate Belgium by means of a railway company and its

---

[59] La Guéronnière telegram to la Valette, January 3, 1869, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 23, op. cit., pp. 112-14. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 131.
[60] Napoleon comment to Metternich, cited in la Valette letter to la Tour, February 28, 1869, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 23, op. cit., pp. 282-83. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 130.
[61] Craig, "Great Britain and the Belgian Railways Dispute of 1869," American Historical Review, op. cit., p. 747.
[62] Clarendon letter to Lyons, March 13, 1869, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 298.

employees."[63] The foreign minister later continued, "I am getting rather anxious about the Belgian railway business which is an audacious attempt on the part of the French govt. to incorporate Belgium. It is absurd for la Valette to say or rather complain that the objections raised by Belgium shew mistrust of France—what would the French govt. and public say if the Ligne du Nord was bought at a ruinously high price by the Chatham and Dover Companies and that English officials were to be in charge of the line up to the walls of Paris?"[64]

True, Napoleon had nothing to do with the initiation of what was essentially a commercial transaction, but the tenuous status of his rule in a demoralized France made him risk acceptant for gain and thus always on the lookout to profit at others' expense. As early as January 1868, Lyons opined that, "the real danger to Europe appears to be the difficulties of the Emperor Napoleon at home. The discontent is great and the distress amongst the working classes severe. The great measure of the session, the new Conscription Act, is very unpopular. There is no glitter at home or abroad to divert public attention, and the French have been a good many years without the excitement of a change."[65] Thus, Millman is correct when he argues that, "it is difficult to conceive how the Chemin de Fer de l'Est could have acted in defiance of Brussels without the financial and political support of its own government. The French

---

[63] General Grey, Victoria's private secretary, letter to Clarendon, January 14, 1869, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 151.
[64] Clarendon letter to Lyons, March 13, 1869, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 298.
[65] Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 125.

government stood to gain if the contemplated arrangement took effect. If the French company managed to obtain the two Belgian lines, these, together with the already acquired Luxembourg railroad, would give France a railway network extending from Switzerland through Luxembourg to Brussels in one direction, and from Luxembourg through Liège into Holland in the other. Such a network would have been invaluable in a war with Prussia, and also a step leading to the annexation of Belgium."[66]

The British foreign minister gave la Valette his word of honor that Prussia had nothing to do with Belgium's response.[67] This doesn't mean that Bismarck did not intend to profit from the dustup. Bernstorff, who never spoke without instruction, intended to drive a wedge between France and Britain by stating that Prussia would not defend Belgium by itself, but that a Prusso-British alliance against France could be had for the asking. Moreover, he pretended to be perplexed that Britain would not publicly undertake a defense of Belgium in this instance by allying with Prussia.[68] Bismarck knew that Clarendon knew that Britain would not be likely to defend Belgium alone should France decide to take it.[69] The chancellor later shocked Loftus by stating that he could resign himself to France's annexing Belgium and that he would know where to find his

---

[66] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 125.
[67] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 158.
[68] Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., pp. 217-18.
[69] Bismarck editorial in The Times August 21 1866, Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 8, op. cit., no. 302. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 144, fn. 1.

compensations. When the British ambassador stated that this was the politics of a brigand, the chancellor concluded that British abstention forced him "into almost a state of vassalage to Russia, and the only way we can recompense Russia is by supporting her. This is not congenial to our interests—but we have no choice."[70] Bismarck did have choices and Clarendon knew that Prussia was as likely to assist France in annexing Belgium as it was to aid Britain in resisting it. He was just trying to identify the highest bidder. As evidence of Prussia's room to maneuver, Bismarck threatened to punish Britain for the rejected alliance offer by working for Russian interests, thus against Britain, in the Near East.

The railways dispute was peaceably resolved on April 27, 1869. The Belgians initially offered to pay economic damages for the contracts that were signed but abrogated by their government. The French finally acceded to this. Napoleon needed friends and he could not afford to alienate Britain when Franco-Prussian tension was running so high. Lyons believed that Britain had successfully made an understated defense of Belgium in Paris and thus did not threaten war with her. But this was whistling to keep one's courage up. At bottom, Britain had no interest in going to war with France over Belgium but it did not want to advertise the yawning chasm between reality and its long-stated interest in protecting Belgium. Moreover, Clarendon did not trust Bismarck; thus he was not interested in a Prusso-British alliance. Bismarck reconsidered and was

---

[70] Loftus letter to Clarendon, April 17, 1869, Foreign Office 64/662, no. 198. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 140.

relieved to be free of such an alliance, because he was not really interested in fighting France over Belgium, which he considered to be just a pawn in the diplomatic game, much as he viewed Luxembourg.[71] Again, Napoleon had backed down and Bismarck believed that it was due to Prussian deterrence in the guise of proffered support for Britain. It is irrelevant that Clarendon never suggested the possibility of a Prusso-British alliance to Paris. What is relevant here is the conclusion that Bismarck drew and this added to his fund of evidence that Napoleon was becoming self-deterred from a clash with Prussia.

The Liberal Empire and the proposal for disarmament.

Upon taking over the foreign office, Clarendon interviewed both Napoleon and Bismarck. He came away with the opinion that Napoleon "has nothing to fear from Prussia if he does not give her just provocation, but on the other hand that Prussia does not fear a war if she can show Germany and the world that she is really forced into it."[72] Clarendon came away impressed by the French side after the report of an interview that Lyons had with Prince Napoleon (Plon-Plon), the largely underestimated cousin of the emperor. Plon-Plon was an ardent champion of nationality and he considered a Franco-Prussian war to be an abomination in European civilization.[73] Plon-Plon believed in a program of domestic, social and political reform, as well as a foreign policy that included partial disarmament, peaceful relations with Germany, and the French

---

[71] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 159.
[72] Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 141.
[73] Plon-Plon told Bismarck so while on an unofficial visit to Prussia in March 1868.

evacuation of Rome.[74] He also had the emperor's ear at a time when his opinion could be decisive for French policy. Napoleon had twice previously engaged in plebiscite elections in order to reduce the influence of the legislature. But the 1869 general election showed extreme dissatisfaction with the imperial empire. Support for the monarch's policies in the corps législatif was assured, but a significant proportion of voters in the urban cities opposed him. This was not new, but the loss of popular support in the countryside was evidence that Napoleon's reign was in jeopardy. Plon-Plon argued to the emperor that the populace was indeed liberal and that the largely hollow reforms of 1867 spearheaded by Rouher would not stand up. Thus, according to the prince, Napoleon had three choices: reaction, conciliation, or compromise (a policy of drift). Conciliation required that the emperor concede genuine responsibility to the legislature, engage in constitutional changes, and liberalize his regime. Should he do so, past mistakes would be forgotten while the opposition would be muzzled. Plon-Plon continued that should the emperor engage in reaction, he might stay in power for a short period, but republican, socialist, and revolutionary forces would be strengthened. Any crisis, whether domestic or foreign, would be exploited. Previously, a physically ill and exhausted emperor had considered abdication, but abdication might not even be a possibility given an aroused and strengthened opposition.[75]

---

[74] Ernest, d'Hauterive, ed., Herbert Wilson, trans., Napoléon III et le Prince Napoléon (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, [1925] 1970), p. 307.
[75] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 283.

Unfortunately, Napoleon continued with a mix of repression and the appearance of legislative progress to muzzle discontent. Although he allowed the outward forms of parliamentary procedure, the ministers nonetheless were still appointed by and responsible to the emperor. The legislators balked and Napoleon then had the good sense to dismiss Rouher and abolish the hated position of minister of state. The liberal Ollivier was appointed prime minister and was invited to form a government. A murder scandal involving the emperor's dissolute cousin, Pierre Bonaparte, prompted demonstrations numbering in the 100,000s and widespread rioting in Paris to which repressive measures were employed, thus putting Ollivier in an incongruous position. Rouher called for a plebiscite and on May 8, 1870, the people were invited to vote for or against Napoleon's Liberal Empire. Cleverly worded, the referendum gave the liberal electorate no choice but to also vote for the emperor's personal empire (political responsibility for the nation resided exclusively in Napoleon) while those who voted against the personal empire were branded as anti-liberals. The electorate cast 7.1 million yes votes against 1.5 million no votes. This was more than technically a win, but ominously, 20% of the army, which had just been given the right to vote, opposed Napoleon as did 25 of his palace guards. The Prussian military attaché to France reported to Berlin his grim opinion that Napoleon would be wise to distract the military from demoralizing political questions by using it in battle.[76]

---

[76] Geoffrey Wawro, The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France

The liberal and dovish Daru was appointed foreign minister and his first course of action was to sound out Britain on the subject of partial disarmament with Germany. Ollivier knew too well the fragile state of France's collective psyche. In order to appease the peasantry, a reduction in the army was necessary. But a public rebuff on the disarmament proposal from Prussia, he argued, would be fatal—un échec, c'est la guerre— for a parliament less able than before to risk "any wound to the national pride."[77] Thus, Clarendon took up the disarmament offer and made it appear that the overture came from London, not from Paris. The foreign minister was respected in Berlin; thus, in February 1870 he approached through Loftus, Bismarck and Wilhelm on the subject. But both Prussians were equally indisposed to consider the subject; disarmament would benefit the lagging French and the king was unwilling to give up his prize (the army is his idol said Clarendon to Victoria) through international sleight of hand. Bismarck told the British foreign minister that Prussia was "surrounded by three empires with armies as large as our own, any two of whom might coalesce against us."[78] Daru took the failure in stride and he even heeded Clarendon's proposal that France take the first step and begin to disarm unilaterally in order to induce Prussia to follow. By reducing the army by 10,000 to a standing strength of 90,000 troops and ridding itself of equipment[79] France was in fact self-deterring because it was generally believed that war might break out at any

---

in 1870-1871 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 29.
[77] Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 172.
[78] Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 182.
[79] Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., pp. 256-59.

moment just as the country was engaged in a credulous pacifism.[80] This was the last proposal for peace as Clarendon died on June 27, 1870. Such was his diplomatic weight on the Continent that Bismarck later famously remarked to Clarendon's daughter that, had he not died, the Franco-Prussian War would never have occurred.[81] Granville was an ineffectual replacement. Gladstone had stated of Claredon that he "was the only living British statesman whose name carried any influence in the councils of Europe."[82]

France was certainly isolated. The chancellor referred to reports of a Triple Alliance directed at Germany as "conjectural rubbish."[83] French occupation of Rome disallowed an alliance with Italy and the Austro-Germans objected to an alliance with Paris as well. Russia could get what it wanted in the Near East by working with Prussia rather than with France. The Luxembourg and Belgian railways crises were clumsily handled and further cemented British suspicions of Napoleonic aggrandizement. The war party in Paris, alluded to earlier, concerned Bismarck not because he feared a conflict, but because he feared that it would keep Napoleon from adopting a conciliatory policy toward German unification.

---

[80] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 291. By contrast, Wilhelm had a standing army of 200,000 troops with the ability to treble that number through his reserve system within a matter of weeks.
[81] Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 4, op. cit., p. 8.
[82] John Morley, The Life of William Ewart Gladstone, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1903), pp. 254-55.
[83] Bismarck letter to Reuss, February 13, 1869, Brandenburg, Hoetzsch, and Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vol. 10, op. cit., no. 517. Cited in Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, op. cit., p. 201.

The chancellor argued that "it will be possible to remake Germany peacefully without war if a constitutional regime continues in France."[84] Moreover, it was in Bismarck's interest to bolster Ollivier's government, because the new prime minister had come to believe that continued opposition to German unification was futile. Ollivier stated in the Kölnische Zeitung that France would have no objection to unification provided that the lesser German states were not forcibly annexed.[85] However, even on this point he equivocated stating, "as far as the Main goes it has been crossed a long time; German unity has already been made against us; what remains is political unity, and that is important only to Prussia to whom it will bring more difficulties than she cares to imagine."[86] Perhaps Bismarck took Ollivier for granted, because he supported the French government in a rather backhanded manner. As discussed below, turning down Baden's petition to join the North German Confederation was, in part, intended so as not to excite the French. But his attempt to hide Prussian complicity in the candidature for the Spanish throne was too clever by half. On the one hand, he reasoned that the hawks would scream for redress, but that Prussian innocence in the matter would discredit them. This would allow Napoleon to commit himself more fully to the liberal program, thus increasing the probability of German unification through peaceful means. On the other

---

[84] Pierre Renouvin and Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, Introduction l'histories des relations internationales, vol. 5 (Paris: A. Colin, 1966), pp. 378-79. Cited in Craig, Germany: 1866-1945, op. cit., p. 24.
[85] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 163.
[86] Renouvin and Duroselle, Introduction l'histories des relations internationales, vol. 5, op. cit., p. 379. Cited in Craig, Germany: 1866-1945, op. cit., p. 25.

hand, if the hawks won out, Prussian arms would successfully resolve the situation.[87]

The stick was also employed as well as the carrot in order to test whether the emperor was self-deterred. As if to further demoralize Napoleon, Bismarck continued to set the pace in Germany. To be sure, the Prussian saw serious setbacks in his quest for unification, but the question throughout Europe was not whether Germany would unify but whether it would unify slowly and peaceably such as not to excite an insecure France.[88] From this standpoint what looks like risk acceptant behavior for gain is really seen from the initiating state as the maintenance of progress on an upward trajectory. In prospect theory this is known as a changing reference point.[89] The failure of gain is seen as a loss and thus the state believes that it is engaging in risk acceptance for loss where third parties see only risk acceptance for gain. The chancellor rightfully saw that the failure to advance unification would eventually undermine his and his sovereign's basis for continued governance. Bismarck was a political genius and he intended to unify Germany from above, not from below. Thus, he tamped down Badenese enthusiasm for joining the North German Confederation

---

[87] Herbert Geuss, Bismarck und Napoleon III: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der preussich-französisischen Bezziehungen 1851-1871 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1959), p. 266. Cited in Craig, Germany: 1866-1945, op. cit., pp. 23-24.
[88] Clarendon interview with Bernstorff, January 27, 1870, Petersdorff et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vol. 6b, op. cit., p. 217. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 301.
[89] Robert Jervis, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," Political Psychology, vol. 13, no. 2, Special Issue: Prospect Theory and Political Psychology (June 1992), p. 197.

famously cautioning against the "…shaking down of unripe fruit, and that the unity of Germany is no ripe fruit at this time."[90] Bismarck made this pronouncement even as he pushed forward on other fronts to advance unification. His abortive effort to have Wilhelm proclaimed kaiser (emperor) of Germany is a case in point. Opening the North German Reichstag in 1870, the king reluctantly called for a national union and a common German fatherland. But as Wawro notes, these words were dynamite to the ears of Napoleon. Even the great sponsor of both nationalism and of a United States of Europe could not tolerate a brazen unified German colossus. Thus, he warned Bismarck in February 1870, "no more violations. If Prussia moves again, France will strike."[91] To that incident is added a Bismarckian adventure to finance a railway through Switzerland in June 1870 with the full expectation that it would anger Napoleon. Here, Bismarck was hinting at an Italo-Prussian alliance directed against France and the strategic railway link was evidence of his intention. In accord with Napoleon's fear of the military and the government, the corps législatif demanded that the emperor draw the line with Bismarck.[92]

Nevertheless, Wetzel gives convincing evidence that Bismarck believed Napoleon to be self-deterred. Above all, the emperor was a man of caution.

---

[90] Petersdorff et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vol. 6b, op. cit., pp. 1-2. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 66-7.
[91] Wawro, The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871, op. cit., p. 32.
[92] Wawro, The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871, op. cit., p. 32.

France shrank from war, with Russia in 1854, and with Italy in 1859, respectively. In both cases, Napoleon's allies pushed him into war and he then made a hasty, ill-conceived, and premature peace. Mexico was given up in 1867 when it appeared that war with the United States was imminent, and, after 1866, the emperor submitted to a string of humiliating reversals.[93] Thus, Bismarck stated that "if Napoleon had wanted to go to war with Prussia, he already had ample provocation."[94]

The Hohenzollern candidature resulting in the Franco-Prussian War (1870). Berlin reciprocated London's overture on disarmament with an overture of its own. On March 12, 1870, the crown princess of Prussia confidentially asked Victoria for her opinion concerning the Hohenzollern candidature for the Spanish throne.[95] Since March 1869, Benedetti informed la Valette of this possibility and thus France was privy to this project. The dictatorial Isabella II had been overthrown by revolution in 1868 and fled into exile in France. The National Assembly, the Cortes, led by Prim, a decorated officer from the Mexican War, drew up a democratic, but monarchical, constitution. It was important to find a suitable, Catholic prince who commanded respect throughout Europe to assume the throne in order to put an end to Spain's endless political upheavals. Prince Leopold, son of Prince Anton of the Prussian Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen

---

[93] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 94.
[94] Georges Bonnin, ed., Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957), p. 278.
[95] Royal princess, Vicky to Victoria, March 12, 1870, Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 10.

dynasty[96] was fourth on a list that included royal candidates from Portugal, Belgium, and Italy. Leopold's brother Charles had ascended the Romanian throne just four years earlier with Napoleon's acquiescence. But a German ruling in the east in Romania did not pose the same problem as a German ruling Spain on France's western flank.

It was understandable why the princess wanted her letter to Victoria to remain secret; the Prussians did not want the French to catch wind of Prim's offer. Neither Wilhelm, nor Anton, nor Leopold, was in favor of the idea; all felt that there were more legitimate claimants to the Spanish throne. Victoria sounded out Clarendon and the foreign minister, in his last days, advised her not to render an opinion on a proposal that was considered unlikely and did not concern Britain in the least. However, Clarendon did recognize that the candidature would create an unfavorable impression in France.[97] Unfortunately, in conveying Clarendon's advice to the Prussians, Victoria gave the Hohenzollern family the impression that Britain had no objection to Leopold's candidacy.[98]

---

[96] The Sigmaringen branch of the Hohenzollerns was Catholic while the royal branch was Protestant. Although connected by marriage through many dynastic houses throughout Europe, the Hohenzollerns recognized Wilhelm, as King of Prussia, as head of the family even though they were closely related to the Murats and the Beauharnais, and thus, were in a sense, Bonapartes. Nevertheless, the Hohenzollerns made no secret of their preference to be regarded as Prussians. See, Bonnin, ed., Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne, op. cit., p. 67.

[97] Clarendon letter to Victoria, March 14, 1870, Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

[98] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 165.

On February 27, 1870, Bismarck was formally apprised of the offer through a missive from Prim. It was at this point that the chancellor's involvement became crucial. The arguments that he set forth in a letter of March 9 to Wilhelm endorsing the candidacy were not even-handed and thus revealed a motivated bias to proceed with the plan. In the event of war with France, a monarch sympathetic to Germany on France's southern flank would be worth two military corps. Should Leopold refuse the offer, a member of the Bavarian house of Wittelsbach would accept and thus thwart Prussia's predominance in Germany. Madrid and Munich would be influenced by France, Austria, and Rome. A republic might be established in Spain that would then spread the democratic spirit to Italy and France and thus provoke Napoleon to take precipitous action against Prussia. Most improbably, Bismarck argued that Napoleon might look with favor upon a Hohenzollern on the Spanish throne since this would be preferable to an Orleanist or the installation of a republic.[99]

Wilhelm's comments that appear in the margin of the letter cast doubt on all of Bismarck's arguments. In summary, "the hypotheses are possible, but equally possible in their nonoccurrence."[100] Moreover, it was not clear to him that accepting the throne in Spain would necessarily enhance the Hohenzollern name in Europe; failure was equally likely. But, although the king refused to

---

[99] Petersdorff et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vol. 6b, op. cit., p. 273. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 77.
[100] Bonnin, ed., Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne, op. cit., pp. 68-73.

command Leopold to take the offer, neither would he obstruct the latter should he desire to accept it. Thus, the king allowed Bismarck to make his case by hosting a dinner in which Wilhelm, Anton, Leopold, Roon, Moltke, and Thile (secretary of state), were among the guests. This was in fact a thinly disguised crown council meeting. Leopold refused to accept the Spanish throne without Wilhelm's assent to which the latter declined to give.[101] No mention was made of a possible bellicose French response to the candidature, which would have made Wilhelm dead set against it. But out of earshot of the king, Moltke was famously asked, "but if Napoleon takes it ill, are we ready?" In response to which the general nodded in a manner that gave evidence of his complete confidence in a Prussian military victory.[102]

In that same month, Benedetti reported evidence of the project to Napoleon and the ambassador was instructed to ask for Prussia's assurance that it would not support something so objectionable to France.[103] Thile falsely professed no knowledge of the candidature. By late June, Clarendon was informed that Napoleon would be compelled to oppose the candidature.[104] Bismarck was in close contact with Prim, and Anton, after wavering now seemed ready to agree to the offer.

---

[101] Robert H. Lord, The Origins of the War of 1870 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924), pp. 20-21.
[102] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 167.
[103] Thompson, Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, op. cit., p. 293.
[104] Layard, British ambassador to Madrid, letter to Clarendon, June 25, 1870, Foreign Office 361/1. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 174.

The continued problem with Rome was the pretext for Daru's resignation[105], and Gramont assumed the role of French foreign minister. This was not good news in Berlin and London. Clarendon stated that "Gramont will be a very bad for. min. and one can only say that he is preferable to the detested rogue la Guéronnière who was the other candidate."[106] Bloomfield, British ambassador to Vienna, opined, "Gramont is favourable to the English alliance but he is violently anti-Prussian and Russian, and he certainly would not be sorry to stir up a feeling against the N. German confed. and stand out against any Prussian advance south of the Main."[107] Nigra, the Italian ambassador to Paris who knew the new French foreign minister well, had the strongest opinion: "There is no other way of saying it; the nomination of Gramont is a prelude to war, nothing could be clearer."[108] Earlier, Lyons summed up the situation nicely: "Prussia holds that it is not conquest or aggression to annex any German state. France considers that the annexation of any of the states south of the Main wd. be as much conquest or aggression on the part of Prussia, as it wd. be, on the part of

---

[105] Daru's left-center party would not support the emperor's constitutional changes; thus the foreign minister believed that he would have a weak position in the cabinet. See, Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 171, fn. 5.

[106] Clarendon letter to Bloomfield, May 8, 1870, Foreign Office 361/1. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 172.

[107] Bloomfield letter to Clarendon, May 12, 1870, Foreign Office 356/40. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 172.

[108] Alessandro d'Ancona, ed., Constantino Nigra: Poesie originalli e tradotti (Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1914), p. 87. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 34.

France to annex them herself. Prussia will never declare that she will not complete the unity of Germany. France will never declare that she will not interfere to prevent this."[109]

Bismarck needed to create a challenge so as to discredit the new hawkish turn in French foreign policy and the Spanish candidature presented a better pretext for this than did the kaiser project. Bismarck was changing his reference point in response to the French challenge. Previously, Loftus was confident that Bismarck was in no hurry to unify Germany and that the accession of the lesser German states into the North German Confederation was "reserved for a distant future."[110] Nevertheless, as Kennedy argues, "while often carrying out a forward policy in other parts of the world, the French position over the German question was essentially defensive; Bismarck's, by contrast, was offensive and a freezing of the status quo would be for him an absolute defeat."[111] Thus, although the project should have been dead with Anton and Leopold's letter of refusal to the Spanish government on April 20, Bismarck went behind his sovereign's back and dispatched Bucher, his trusted aide, and Versen, a Prussian officer named by Moltke, on a secret mission to Madrid to further negotiate the candidature.

---

[109] Lyons letter to Clarendon, March 11, 1870. Cited in Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 266.
[110] Loftus letter to Clarendon, September 25, 1869, Foreign Office 64/666, no. 444. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 167.
[111] Paul M. Kennedy, The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914 (London: Ashfield Press, 1980), p. 20.

It is not too difficult to determine Bismarck's motives here. Bucher was instructed to treat his mission as purely a dynastic quasi-private matter in which the Prussian state was to have no knowledge. In turn, Madrid was to deal only with the Sigmaringen family. Then, Bismarck could plausibly claim that he had no involvement in the affair.[112] As indicated earlier, Prussian innocence would then discredit Napoleon's right-wing extremist opponents and thus the chancellor could bolster the emperor's conciliatory policy towards German unification. But Napoleon had already reversed preference by appointing Gramont as foreign minister; it was widely believed that he was appointed precisely to precipitate a diplomatic showdown or a war with Germany.[113] Thus, how Bismarck could believe that this gambit would support Ollivier's government is a mystery. Bucher, who knew Bismarck professionally better than anyone because he was his closest collaborator in the foreign office for two decades, and who was the one to whom the Prussian dictated his reminiscences, is a better guide to the latter's motives. According to Eyck, Bucher "knew better than anybody else how completely Bismarck distorted the truth, and in conversation with his friend Busch he called the Hohenzollern candidature frankly 'a trap which Bismarck set for Napoleon', and he added that neither the

[112] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., pp. 354-55.
[113] Wawro, The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871, op. cit., p. 35.

king nor the crown prince had the least idea of this feature of Bismarck's manœuvre."[114]

Bucher and Versen tirelessly engaged in shuttle diplomacy between Madrid and Sigmaringen. Anton, who dominated his son's thinking, was vainglorious and unduly attracted by the trappings of power. It was not too difficult to appeal to his sense of patriotism in order to change his mind regarding acceptance of the offer. Nevertheless, he wanted guarantees that Prussia would provide full support for his son's candidacy. That is why he wanted Wilhelm to command his son to take the offer. Wilhelm stated he would never do this. On June 19, Frederick Wilhelm, the crown prince, let slip to the king that he had become a convert to the candidature plan, that Bucher was in Spain, that Versen was away from his Posen diplomatic post, and that Salazar, a Spanish diplomat, was enroute to Germany. Wilhelm was highly annoyed that unauthorized diplomatic activities were taking place when he thought that the issue had been put to rest. Bismarck was informed that Wilhelm wanted to be apprised of all the negotiations, henceforth. In the margin of the message the chancellor is quite explicit regarding his plan: "That beats everything!… So his majesty wants the affair treated with royal official interference?!…The affair is possible only if it remains the limited concern of the Hohenzollern princes, it must not turn into a Prussian concern, the king must be able to say without lying:

---

[114] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 164.

I know nothing about it."[115] Dynastic law required the king's approval, which Wilhelm, on June 21, 1870 "with a heavy, very heavy heart" finally gave when apprised by Versen that Leopold finally wanted the throne.[116] This was good enough for Anton and he informed Madrid of Leopold's acceptance of the Spanish throne.

Bismarck intended to present France and the rest of Europe with a Hohenzollern on the Spanish throne as a fait accompli. He clearly hewed to the certainty principle here, believing that Napoleon would either receive the news with a good grace and stay at peace or he would be enraged and go to war with Germany. A June 25, 1870 'letter of instructions', as it has come to be known, written either by Bucher or Bismarck, gives some insight into Bismarck's belief as to what might happen. It was written to calm Spanish nerves over the nearly two year delay of the candidature from Prussia's end. The author writes, "it is possible that we may see a passing fermentation in France, and, without doubt, it is necessary to avoid anything that might provoke or increase it."[117] Wetzel agrees with Becker that "it cannot be seriously maintained that Bismarck failed to anticipate the reaction of the French; to do so would, as Pflanze writes, 'place him behind an amateur like Karl Anton, who from the outset predicted a wild

---

[115] Bonnin, ed., Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne, op. cit., pp. 197, 201.
[116] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 88.
[117] Lawrence D. Steefel, "Bismarck and Bucher: The Letter of Instructions of June 1870," in Arshag O. Sarkissian, ed., Studies in Diplomatic History and Historiography in Honour of G.P. Gooch (London: Longmans, 1961), p. 218.

reaction in anti-Prussian Europe.'"[118] But Wetzel rejects Becker's contention that Bismarck advocated preventive war, here citing the chancellor's well-known aversion to it as akin to committing suicide because one was afraid to die.[119] We should remember Gall's observation that Bismarck preferred to stand on the defensive in order to force his opponent to first commit himself.[120] Thus, Bismarck stated that "if the trumpets of war were to sound, France would have to sound them" but that he was confident, up until the middle of July, that Napoleon would not give the command.[121] Thus, Wetzel argues that Bismarck's fostering of the Hohenzollern candidature was as to parry the new French aggressiveness with the appointment of Gramont.[122] Seignobos argues that Bismarck intended to surprise France much as he did Austria and Russia with the successful installation of Charles on the Romanian throne in 1866.[123] This might have been Bismarck's thinking, but he certainly could not have rated peace any higher than war in this instance. This is because Napoleon had warned him

---

[118] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 88; Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 459.
[119] Petersdorff et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vol. 6c, op. cit., p. 63. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 92-3.
[120] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 333.
[121] Cited in Craig, Germany: 1866-1945, op. cit., p. 25.
[122] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 93.
[123] Charles Seignobos, "Le Declin de l'Empire et d'establishement de la 3rd republique 1854-1875" in Ernest Lavisse, ed., Histoire de France contemporaine, vol. 7 (Paris: Hachette, 1921). Cited in Frank Spencer, "Historical Revision no. cxxii: Bismarck and the Franco-Prussian War," History, vol. 40, no. 140 (October 1955), p. 321.

as early as 1869 that France would not suffer a Hohenzollern on the Spanish throne. It is not clear whether Bismarck intended this affair to lead to war, but he had to know that he was certainly bringing war within sight.[124] Thus, it is well to bear in mind Hanotaux's invocation of Montesquieu's dictum that "the real author of a war is not the man who declares it, but he who makes it necessary."[125]

Bismarck's plan went awry because the Cortes by law had to choose the new king, but it could not be kept in session much longer due to the oppressive summer heat. A cipher clerk's blunder in decoding Salazar's telegram to Madrid regarding Leopold's acceptance set the election for "about the 9th [of August]" and not as "about the 26th [of July]" as intended.[126] The Spanish legislature had been prorogued and to call it back for an emergency session aroused suspicions, particularly in Paris. On July 2, Prim informed Mercier, the French ambassador to Madrid, of Leopold's acceptance of the Spanish throne. As Wetzel argues, this had been known for some time and Paris shouldn't have pretended to have been

---

[124] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., pp. 169-70.
[125] Gabriel Hanotaux, John C. Turner, trans., Contemporary France (NY: G.P Putnam's Sons, 1903), Ch. 5. Cited in Spencer, "Historical Revision no. cxxii: Bismarck and the Franco-Prussian War," op. cit., p. 321.
[126] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 458-59. Becker believes that the problem may not have entirely been due to a decoding mistake. He argues that Prim was prevaricating due anticipated negative regret at the French response. See, Joseph Becker, "Bismarck, Prim, die Sigmaringen Hohenzollern und die spanische Thronfrage," Francia, vol. 9 (1981), pp. 450-60.

surprised.[127] Gramont huddled with Napoleon at Saint Cloud and the former advised a strategy whereby France was to appear as the aggrieved party and that Prussia, and in particular Bismarck, was considered to be behind this affair. A four-step strategy was devised. First, the candidature should be attacked in Madrid and Berlin. Messages to Madrid in velvet-gloved terms indicated that Leopold's presence would be an intolerable affront to France's honor. A more brusque approach was taken in Berlin. Le Sourd, the French embassy chargé d'affaires, was to tell the Prussians, "we cannot, without some chagrin, see a Prussian prince sitting himself on the throne of Spain. We should, of course, prefer to learn that the cabinet of Berlin was not privy to this intrigue; if the contrary were the case, its conduct would suggest to us an attitude of too malevolent a nature to define in a telegram."[128] No one of importance save for Thile was around, and again, he disavowed any knowledge of Berlin's complicity in the Spanish affair. This angered Gramont, since he had been apprised that Prim had corresponded directly with Bismarck on the subject.[129] Nonetheless, Gramont revealed his ineptness at handling the crisis and his motivated bias to contest Prussia, either through diplomatic humiliation or war. What else was Thile to do? To admit any complicity would have given the

---

[127] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 97.
[128] Gramont telegram to le Sourd, July 3, 1870, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 28, op. cit., p. 22. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 98.
[129] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., p. 189.

French foreign minister license to engage in exaggeration in order to take precipitate action. As the Prussians disclaimed any knowledge of the affair, why would Gramont not then ask them to use their good offices to defuse the situation? This was an egregious diplomatic omission by a singularly inept statesman.

The French foreign minister's second step was to alarm all of Europe through diplomatic messages to all of the capitals about the immediate peril that France was put in. Gladstone was asked by Napoleon through the Rothchilds to aid in getting the candidature withdrawn. But the British prime minister declined to interfere with Spain's right to choose its own sovereign.[130] An equally tepid response was met with in St. Petersburg. Crucially, the third step was to create the same sense of panic within France. Public opinion was rather inert at this point and it was precisely this press baiting that ended up creating an artificially wounded amour-propre.

The last step was to confer with Werther, the Prussian ambassador to Paris who was Francophile, to determine if a back channel to Wilhelm, who was vacationing at Bad Ems, might be found in order that the latter might intercede to forbid the candidature. But Gramont missed his best opportunity by failing to suggest that Napoleon and Wilhelm might personally meet in order to defuse the situation.[131] Moreover, it was impossible for Werther to react in a timely fashion

---

[130] Morley, The Life of William Ewart Gladstone, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 235.
[131] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 97-102.

because, on July 6, Gramont made an inflammatory statement in the corps législatif that "[France] will not tolerate a foreign power placing one of its princes on the throne of Charles V and thus disturbing the balance of power… [and that France] would know how to discharge…[its] duty without faltering or weakness."[132] Surprisingly, the liberal Ollivier had a hand in writing these inflammatory words. But unlike Gramont, Olliver had no motivated bias towards the Prussians; in fact, he was largely sympathetic toward them. The prime minister just thought that a hard line here would deter Prussia. Unfortunately, Ollivier never had control of his foreign minister. As will be demonstrated, just when France was given the requisite satisfaction needed to put an end to the crisis, Gramont took diplomatic actions that would ensure the outbreak of war.

Gramont's incendiary speech in the corps législatif threatened Armageddon. Prussia was specifically accused of promoting the candidature. Moreover, diplomatic convention went by the boards as Prussia was insultingly referred to as a foreign power instead of as a neighboring people.[133] The British government took some time to understand the seriousness of the situation although it did manage to aid in dissuading both the Spanish and the Sigmaringens from further promoting the candidature. According to Sorel, "in England, public opinion declared itself against the candidature of prince

---

[132] Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 181.
[133] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 110.

Leopold. The Times formally condemned it. But in recognizing the legitimacy of the French grievances, the English wished above all to maintain peace."[134] At Granville's request, one seconded by the king of Belgium, Victoria was able to petition a relative married into the Sigmaringen family to secure a withdrawal of the candidature.[135] The prime minister was able to persuade Rances, the Spanish foreign minister, as to the likelihood of war should his government proceed with the project of putting Leopold on the throne.[136] Nevertheless, London mostly pressed for moderation in Paris and in Madrid, but not in Berlin. Lyons, that prescient diplomat, clearly saw the kernel of the problem. Although he was able to obtain Gramont's assurance that withdrawal of the candidature would put an end to the crisis, where if it was not, the France would declare war on Prussia,[137] the British ambassador scarcely believed it. To Granville he wrote, "if the Hohenzollern's renunciation is announced in 24 or 48 hours, there will be peace for the moment—if not there will be an immediate declaration of war against Prussia…The French are getting rather more and more excited. They think they have got the start of Prussia this time in forwardship of preparation…If the

---

[134] Albert Sorel, Histoire diplomatique de la guerre Franco-Allemande, vol. 1 (Paris: E. Plon et cie, 1875), p. 70. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 183-4.
[135] King of Belgium letter to Victoria, July 10, 1870, Benson and Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 24-25.
[136] Granville letter to Layard, July 7, 1870, Foreign Office 146/1449, no. 5. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 182.
[137] Lyons letter to Granville, July 10, 1870, Foreign Office 27/1805, no. 726. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 186.

excitement goes on, the French may choose to pick a quarrel on the form of the renunciation or some other pretext, even if the prince retires."[138] To Layard, Lyons wrote, "notwithstanding the assurance of Gramont's…I am not quite sure that even Hohenzollern's renunciation wd. stop them. How Prim could suppose they wd. endure a secret plot between him and Prussia coming upon them as a surprise it is difficult to conceive."[139]

This is precisely what happened. Gramont dispatched Benedetti to Bad Ems, not only to obtain a promise from Wilhelm to withdraw the candidature, but also to obtain a confession that he had been involved in the project from the start. On July 9, the forthright king admitted to the French diplomat the latter, but refused the former. Nevertheless, Wilhelm fully understood the seriousness of the situation and he did his level best to leave the Sigmaringen family full liberty to withdraw the candidacy considering the freighted situation, with the understanding that he would sanction this desired action. Leopold was hiking in the Alps and thus was difficult to reach. But Wilhelm went the extra mile by keeping Benedetti apprised of the proceedings, indicating that an answer would not be long in coming. Benedetti fully understood that the king was trying to manage the crisis in a manner favorable to the French. Thus, on July 10 he petitioned Gramont to relax the excited tensions in Paris. But Gramont wanted

---

[138] Lyons letter to Granville, July 10, 1870, Lyons Papers, RC 2. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 186.

[139] Lyons letter to Layard, July 10, 1870, Lyons Papers, RC 2. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 186.

his emissary to redouble his efforts and the latter was forced to impertinently state to the king that he was not doing enough and that preparations were being made in Madrid to welcome Leopold (which was not true). Gramont demanded that Wilhelm explicitly command Leopold to withdraw the candidacy, which the king, as from the start, refused to do. Gramont upbraided Benedetti by stating that time was running out even as the latter responded that "a delay of two or three days will not make things worse."[140] In part, Gramont had in mind excited demands from le Boeuf, the new war minister, that the French army needed to mobilize now in order to get the jump on the Prussians.[141] Nevertheless, Gramont's fractious attitude is a strong instance of defensive avoidance. He persisted in instructing Benedetti to exact from Wilhelm a promise that the latter repeatedly stated he would not give.

Gramont told Lyons that inflamed public opinion in France was justification for the government's conduct. But this was quite wrong. Public opinion throughout France took Leopold's acceptance of the Spanish throne in stride; it was not particularly perturbed until Gramont had whipped up opinion in the corps législatif and in the chauvinistic press that this was an affront to

---

[140] Benedetti telegram to Gramont, July 11, 1870, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 28, op. cit., p. 219. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 117.

[141] Gramont letter to Napoleon, July 12, 1870, Antoine Agénor, duc de Gramont, La France et le Prusse avant la guerre (Paris: E. Dentu, 1872), p. 102. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 122.

French prestige.[142] By making public, delicate private discussions that needed time to bear fruit, Gramont was responsible for creating a public propaganda beast that continually needed to be fed by fulminations from the rostrum that ran well ahead of actual events. The Moniteur, for instance, nonsensically demanded that Prussia, as a measure of goodwill, evacuate and abandon the great fortress of Mainz on the Rhine.[143] It would be difficult to improve upon Craig's assessment of this statesman: "Where reflection was needed, [Gramont] was impulsive; where deliberation of utterance was advisable, he was violent; and where a sense of measure might have crowned his career with a brilliant success, he overreached and tumbled his nation into disaster."[144]

On July 12, Paris intercepted a telegram intended for Madrid in which Anton formally withdrew his son's candidacy. Instead of waiting for further confirmation, Ollivier read the missive from Prim aloud in the corps législatif and aspersions were immediately cast upon it. Why had Anton, and not Leopold, written the message? Would Leopold just show up at Madrid in the dark of night as did Charles in Romania? Why was there no formal pronouncement from Berlin, much less from Wilhelm? Upon hearing the news of the renunciation, Wilhelm privately expressed to Augusta, queen of Prussia, that

---

[142] Craig, Germany: 1866-1945, op. cit., p. 26.
[143] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 145.
[144] Craig, Germany: 1866-1945, op. cit., p. 26.

"a stone had fallen from his heart...Take care to keep silent."[145] The king was being circumspect here; there was nothing to report to the French until he had Anton's letter of renunciation in hand. But Lyons was quite correct that passions were so inflamed in Paris that any pretext would now be found either to publicly humiliate Prussia or to force it into war.

Wilhelm was in difficulty here; Paris had formerly drawn sympathy from all of the major capitals for the predicament that Bismarck had put it in. All that Gramont had to do was to ask the German chancellor publicly to aid him in altering a matter that threatened the peace of Europe. France would then score a major diplomatic triumph because of Bismarck's ridiculous fiction that he was not involved in the project. Support on the part of the lesser German states for Prussia was not axiomatic and certainly less so if the latter precipitated a war against France for its own aggrandizement. Thus, Gramont could easily have used the diplomatic victory in order to drive the German states south of the Main into the arms of the French or at least to put distance between them and Prussia. All he had to do was to remind them of how close they had come to war over Prussian dynastic motives and that it was French restraint that had prevented a catastrophe.[146] But Gramont refused to take yes for an answer and instead, as

---

[145] Bonnin, ed., Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne, op. cit., p. 242. Cited in Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1, op. cit., p. 465.
[146] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

will be demonstrated, overplayed his hand by demanding guarantees from Prussia.

As Wawro notes, Gramont played right into Bismarck's hands. Each wanted war as much as the other. The only problem was that Prussia was prepared whereas France was not. Gramont blithely believed that Austria and Italy would join France in a war of revenge against Prussia. He never took time to consider that Austria would not look kindly upon the Italian army marching through its territory enroute to Prussia. Moreover, he never directed the requisite diplomacy that might have cemented alliances prior to the outbreak of hostilities. Contrary to Gramont's belief, the Italians did not feel indebted to the French for their victories at Solferino and Magenta in 1859 and the presence of the Pope in Rome was intolerable to them.[147] It has been argued that dysfunctional politics prevented the Austrian army from necessary reforms that would have made it a fit fighting French ally.[148] This is beside the point for Austria did not forget French perfidy in failing to come to its aid during the Austro-Prussian War and it was largely determined to reciprocate the favor.

Ollivier believed that Anton's renunciation effectively closed the matter. Gramont was reminded by Lyons of the former's promise to close the affair should the renunciation take place. Moreover, the foreign minister was warned

---

[147] Wawro, The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871, op. cit., p. 36.
[148] Scott Lackey, "The Habsburg Army and the Franco-Prussian War: The Failure to Intervene and its Consequences," War in History, vol. 2, no. 2 (1995), pp. 151-79.

that if war occurred, "public opinion throughout the world would be against France."[149] Even Napoleon, at first, assumed a conciliatory stance when he wrote to Victor Emanuel, the king of Italy, that "it is peace…I know that some elements of public opinion in France would have preferred…war, but I see in the renunciation a satisfactory solution that deprives of any pretext for it."[150] However, Napoleon then made a series of egregious mistakes. First, he did not close the affair but instead allowed himself to be influenced by the chauvinistic French press and the right wing extremists within his government who were not satisfied with the fiction that the Hohenzollern candidature was a private affair between the Spaniards and a dynastic family in which Prussia was not involved. Second, the emperor reverted to personal empire by directing Gramont to instruct Benedetti without first consulting his ministers, in particular Ollivier. Had Napoleon not bypassed his ministers, Ollivier would surely have headed off the new demands. The foreign minister instructed Benedetti to demand that Wilhelm publicly approve Leopold's renunciation and say that Leopold's candidature for the Spanish throne was never to be raised again.[151] The king rebuffed Benedetti's reluctant demand for a future guarantee, but he indicated

---

[149] Lyons letter to Granville, July 12, 1870, Foreign Office 27/1806, no. 738. Cited in Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71, op. cit., p. 386.
[150] Constantine Nigra, "Souvenirs diplomatiques 1870," Bibliothèque universelle et revue suisse, vol. 65, no. 195 (March 1895), pp. 1-25. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 139.
[151] Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, op. cit., pp. 171-72.

that he would give his unconditional approval to the resignation.[152] Moreover, Wilhelm was courteous and told the diplomat that he had done as much as he could do. The king then authorized an account of the cordial meetings with Benedetti to be transmitted to Bismarck with the further instruction that the information be made public as the latter saw fit.[153] The chancellor had deliberately stayed at his estate in Varzin away from Wilhelm's side in order to continue the pretense that he was not involved. But Bismarck was morose at the prospect that Wilhelm would give way and consequently, either a public humiliation or a war would be averted. His mood brightened considerably when he hit upon the idea of editing the Ems telegram for publication in such manner that it took on a completely different tenor than the king intended. Bismarck cut out the conciliatory passages and concluded it with the explosive statement, "his majesty the king therefore decided not to receive the French ambassador and sent an aide-de-camp to tell him that his majesty had nothing further to communicate."[154] Upon reading Bismarck's bit of chicanery, Moltke exclaimed

---

[152] Gramont was fully apprised of this positive turn of events in Benedetti's July 12, 1870 telegram to him. See, Edouard Benedetti, "Ma Mission à Ems" Revue de Paris, vol. 5 (September 15, 1895), p. 302. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 120-21.

[153] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 358.

[154] Otto von Bismarck, Friedrich Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 15 (Paderbron, GE: Schöningh Verlag, [1924-35] 2004), p. 310. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 495.

that, "what had sounded before like a parley, was now a flourish in answer to a challenge."[155]

Publication of the Ems telegram in both the French and German newspapers was not the catalyst for the French declaration of war. It merely gave justification for a decision that had already been made. Bismarck later boasted that he concocted the fabrication in order to drive France into war so as to unify Germany by drawing the lesser German states closer to Prussia: "The gulf between north and south Germany could not be more effectively bridged than by a common national war against the neighboring nation, our aggressor for centuries."[156] This gloss on history is quite false; it is safer to say that Bismarck was improvising and that his motivated bias to steal a march on France with the fait accompli of seating Leopold on the Spanish throne was backfiring when the French solved the chancellor's problems by demanding humiliating guarantees of Prussia. Nevertheless, the Ems telegram had the effect of drawing support for Prussia from all of the German peoples including those south of the Main because of Benedetti's alleged insult to Wilhelm.[157]

It is likely that Bismarck decided that war with France was inevitable after Gramont's incendiary speech in the corps législatif on July 6.[158] Such was not so

---

[155] Bismarck, Thimme, ed., Die gesamme Werke, vol. 15, op. cit., p. 310. Cited in Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, 1789-1914, op. cit., p. 495.
[156] Cited in Spencer, "Historical Revision no. cxxii: Bismarck and the Franco-Prussian War," op. cit., p. 320.
[157] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 359.
[158] Spencer, "Historical Revision no. cxxii: Bismarck and the Franco-Prussian War," op. cit., p. 324.

with Napoleon and he procrastinated until the end. Two ministerial council meetings at St. Cloud took place before France declared war on Prussia. Ministers present at the first meeting, on the evening of July 14, were not privy to newspaper reports on the Ems telegram, even as the first accounts congratulated France on its diplomatic success. Upon hearing of the candidature, Gramont clearly hewed to the certainty principle by asserting that, in Ollivier's remembrance, France was faced with "the naked choice between 'war and abdication as a Great Power.'"[159] This was not the case. Rather, Gramont's rashness and incompetence produced the pseudo-certainty principle ahead of the certainty principle.[160] A confluence of factors and missteps, notably the creation of the public propaganda machine that Gramont could no longer control and the military timetable to begin mobilizing two weeks prior to the Prussians demanded by le Boeuf in order to avoid the risk of disaster, made the ministers, even those predisposed to moderation, to assent to calling up the reserves.

---

[159] Ollivier, brown notebook, n.d. (probably from 1872), Ollivier Papers. Cited in Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., pp. 119-20.

[160] In an American decisionmaking account of the Munich crisis, Farnham observes that "the certainty effect may have been combined with the so-called pseudo-certainty effect to reinforce Roosevelt's sense that war would be a disaster. That is, people tend to treat extremely likely but uncertain outcomes as though they were certain. Thus, as the probability of war rose at Godesberg, Roosevelt may first have converted it into a certainty in line with the pseudo-certainty effect and then overweighted it because of the certainty effect." See, Barbara Farnham, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis: Insights from Prospect Theory," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), p. 62; Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Rational choice and the framing of decisions," Journal of Business, vol. 59, no. 4, Part 2: The Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory (October 1986), pp. S251-S278.

Millman is quite wrong in believing that this action did not necessarily mean war.[161] Wetzel is closer to the mark when he argues that "behind the scenes, the wheels of the two great military establishments, the French and the Prussian, had begun to gather speed—grinding along in the manner of such establishments, impervious to any hopeful political possibilities, accepting if only for the hypotheses of military planning, the inevitability of a war that was otherwise, even at this stage, not at all inevitable, and thereby creating a virtual inevitablity that, for their own efforts, would not necessarily have existed at all."[162]

The hopeful political possibility that Wetzel speaks of was a belated proposal by the British to call a congress to consider the dispute. Napoleon was intrigued by the idea; this was always his fallback option.[163] Bismarck, however, did not recommend the idea to Wilhelm. Unfortunately, the congress proposal was dead when the war party, in particular Gramont, le Boeuf, and the empress Eugénie conjoined military timetable arguments with the now very real, but originally concocted, national feeling of wounded amour-propre to argue that war was inevitable. Thus, the French council voted unanimously for war on July 15 and hostilities opened four days later. Although Britain had long before

---

[161] Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 194.
[162] Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 166 (emphasis mine).
[163] On July 17, Gramont thanked Britain for its peace effort but declined due to the publication of the Ems telegram. See, France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vol. 24, op. cit., pp. 41-42. Cited in Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War, op. cit., p. 194, fn. 5.

decided not to intervene in the war, Bismarck's release for publication in The Times of Benedetti's handwritten draft treaty with Prussia of 1866 in which France was to acquire Belgium revulsed public opinion and thus gave the Gladstone government cover for its non-intervention. The most that Britain would do was to secure assurances from both antagonists to respect Belgian neutrality. On September 2, the Prussians routed the French army at Sedan. The war then dragged on for a year and ended with the Prussian siege of Paris. Bismarck reasoned that an irremediably hostile France would never forgive Prussia for this 'second Königgrätz' and thus he annexed Alsace and Lorraine in order to acquire a security cordon.[164] Once again, Bismarck managed to isolate a major power and then soundly defeat it in battle in order to complete the unification of Germany.

Conclusion: The dynamics of asymmetric affective abandonment.

German historians have been noticeably more partisan than their French and English counterparts in assessing Bismarck's motives with regard to the crisis that produced the Franco-Prussian War. Gall, for instance, largely exculpates the chancellor by arguing that the flagging move for unification led him to engage in the Spanish throne gambit because no more promising target presented itself. The kaiser project was receiving significant opposition, particularly from Bavaria which had ideas of its own about becoming the counterpoint to Prussian hegemony within Germany. Thus, Gall argues that Bismarck believed that the

[164] The annexations were also a salve to Moltke and the Prussian army whom Bismarck denied territories at the conclusion of the 1866 Austro-Prussian War.

dangers and opportunities were from the Prussian standpoint precisely balanced.[165] But this rational choice explanation clearly fails because it is difficult to believe both that Bismarck's complicity in the Hohenzollern candidature would not be found out or that Napoleon would take kindly to the installation of a Prussian on the Spanish throne. Moreover, the chancellor deliberately thwarted his sovereign's intention to remain at peace with France and circumvented him at every step in order to at least force a diplomatic humiliation on Napoleon in order to extricate himself from his overreaching.

One might argue that Bismarck was proceeding with a rational choice calculus and that he simply miscalculated. It is true that he, just like Napoleon, preferred to achieve his objectives peaceably. The problem is that he could not because only a war would allow him to unify Germany from the top down, not democratically from the bottom up. A liberal, democratic Germany would have required concessions to the lesser German states that the chancellor was loathe to make. Thus, a patriotic war against a traditional foe to avenge an alleged diplomatic insult was the road that Bismarck chose in order to bring the lesser German states into the North German Confederation.[166]

From a prospect perspective, the endowment effect should make actors less likely to engage in risk acceptance for gain. Yet in this case, Bismarck's

---

[165] Gall, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck, op. cit., p. 349. See, Halperin, "The Origins of the Franco-Prussian War Revisited: Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne," op. cit., for criticisms of tendentious analyses that exculpate Prussia from any responsibility for the war.
[166] Spencer, "Historical Revision no. cxxii: Bismarck and the Franco-Prussian War," op. cit., p. 324.

attempt to place a Prussian-friendly government on France's southern flank is a risk-acceptant taking. But as indicated earlier, it is likely that Bismarck was changing his reference point such that the failure to achieve a gain (measures to promote German unification) was seen as a loss. Thus, what France and Britain agreed was a secretive attempt to steal a march on the former, and thus risk acceptance for gain, was likely seen by the chancellor as risk acceptance for loss.

It is difficult to find evidence that Bismarck tries to conciliate the French in order to lower the risk of war as the crisis reached its culmination. The certainty principle points to failing to invest in conciliatory resources that bring a higher probability of keeping the peace even at the cost of being less prepared to prevail if war does break out. Moreover, springing a fait accompli on the French by secretly installing Leopold on the Spanish throne hardly comports with using the insurance premium in other than a risky fashion. The pretense that the Prussians were not involved, although it was not believed by anybody, had it held up would have given the French little concrete evidence for complaint. In that sense, the peace would have been kept because France's reason for prosecuting a war against Prussia would not have been obvious. Bismarck certainly showed less loyalty to Wilhelm than might have been expected and there is evidence that he was willing to let his sovereign take the blame for the Hohenzollern fiasco while intending to take credit for himself should it have succeeded. This, in itself, does not indicate a motivated bias to force a humiliation or war on France. What does is the mendacity associated with the edited Ems telegram. Had the doctored

telegram not drawn sufficient ire on both sides, the chancellor was ready to interpellate the North German legislature regarding war with France. Moreover, tendering his resignation was always Bismarck's best argument should he not get his way and this was certainly on his mind.[167]

From the French side the crisis that led to the war was indeed a trap sprung on it by Bismarck. Absent the actions of the war party, the chancellor believed until late in the crisis that Napoleon would peaceably give way. In this sense, he believed that France was self-deterred. But with the appointment of the bellicose and anti-Prussian Gramont as foreign minister, a preference reversal was made regarding French policy towards Prussia. In this regard, Napoleon was certainly using the insurance premium in a risky fashion. The endowment effect rightly points towards his determination to prevent the Hohenzollern prince from ascending the Spanish throne. But Anton's renunciation of Leopold's candidacy gave France everything that it needed for scoring a diplomatic victory over Prussia. Moreover, the move towards Prussian unification would have further been stalled because the lesser German states would gravitate towards France due to the latter's exhibited restraint. But Gramont hijacked French foreign policy by overestimating the depth of his success and instead was determined to force a humiliation on Prussia. What was formerly a risky use of the insurance premium in order to avoid loss that had succeeded had now been transformed into a lottery ticket in order to take a long-shot gamble on an

---

[167] Spencer, "Historical Revision no. cxxii: Bismarck and the Franco-Prussian War," op. cit., p. 322.

unattainable gain. The French demand for future guarantees from Wilhelm was both inadmissible and pointless. This tactlessness was not unwelcome to Bismarck because he then could have the war that he needed in order to restart German unification.

Chapter 8: A Partial Assessment of Prospective Balance Theory.

Prospective Balance is an interactionist theory that asserts an improved explanation of interstate cooperation and conflict over neorealist theories that derive their explanatory power from distinctive distributions of power in the international system. At bottom, neorealism relies on expected utility calculations as the basis for state choice. Thus, states should be indifferent between gains and losses when making foreign policy choices. But neorealism has difficulty in explaining cases in which states do not engage in aggression when it appears to be profitable from a cost/benefit analysis and cases in which states engage in aggression that have little potential for profit.

Neoclassical realism has recently been proposed as an advance over neorealism's paucity of explanatory power. In essence, neoclassical realism posits almost no explanatory power with respect to the influence of factors that reside at the international level. Jack Snyder, for example, finds that in none of the major power cases that he examines were international pressures necessary to explain a state's overexpansion. Thus, he finds a domestic coalition explanation to be most persuasive.[1] Schweller's recent theory of underbalancing holds constant the level of threat in the international system. The structural characteristics in which society and government interact at the domestic level of

[1] Jack L. Snyder, Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 306-11.

analysis provide the explanation as to whether states will balance or underbalance against an external threat.[2]

The neoclassical realist research program provides powerful insights into drivers of foreign policy choices, notably the deeper, more longer term, characteristics of both state and society. Still, neoclassical realism takes insufficient account of the degree to which the international system is a permissive (rather than a necessary) factor in the foreign policy choices that states make. This neglect is quite at odds with the European diplomatic history of the 19th century. The roughly fifty-year period that I examine demonstrates the crucial influence of interstate dynamics as being causal to the knife-edged decisions as to whether states will cooperate with one another to maintain the peace or whether they will largely go their own way and make foreign policy decisions based on affect, usually resulting from domestic politics. Boulding identified systemic dynamics in which interstate conflict was promoted either by real incompatibility or illusory incompatibility.[3] In selecting from the four systemic dynamics identified by Prospective Balance in Chapter 1, I was interested in examining instances in which states were faced with dynamics of real compatibility on the one hand, and on the other hand, of illusory compatibility. Thus, the dynamics of widespread loss aversion and affective abandonment were examined in detail in this dissertation.

---

[2] Randall L. Schweller, Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
[3] Kenneth Boulding, "National Images and International Systems," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 3, no. 2 (1959), p. 130.

Widespread loss aversion suggests a restoration to a situation resembling the status quo after a foreign policy demand has been made even though hard bargaining and counter-threats may transpire. States are more likely to take account of the interests of others as they relax their attachment to endowments, invest in cooperative schemes that relax adherence to the certainty principle, and largely use the insurance premium in conservative fashion. Threats to revert to more risk acceptant actions for loss (notably increased attachment to the endowment effect, greater adherence to the certainty principle, and a more risky use of the insurance premium) are taken conditionally and thus are intended to bring recalcitrant states back into the cooperative fold. Moreover, these actions are largely telegraphed, should not take others by surprise, and are understood as necessary measures to ensure cooperation.

In some contrast, affective abandonment of rational consistency is less straight-forward and the theoretical possibilities are more complex. Thus, conflict may eventually result when states fail to make clear to each other a determination to protect their respective interests from encroachment. Further characterized as mutual conciliatory affective abandonment, over-deterrence results and efforts to reinstate mutual deterrence can actually exacerbate conflict. Next, conflict may result when states are under-deterred because third parties fail to punish their aggression in timely fashion. I characterize this dynamic as mutual aggressive affective abandonment. Finally, a rising state might find itself under-deterred from aggression as a consequence of either over-deterrence, or

self-deterrence, or both, on the part of second and third parties. Thus, asymmetric affective abandonment results. Regarding these three theoretical possibilities, risk acceptant actions taken to avoid loss, noted above, will be quite sudden due to anticipated negative regret, will take others by surprise, and will not appear to serve a useful purpose. This is largely because such preference reversals take place despite the fact that the status quo has not materially changed. The impetus for such actions is likely to be domestic politics which can be quite opaque to other states. In extreme instances, states will convert the insurance premium into a lottery ticket in order to take a long-shot chance on making gains in the face of determined resistance. Thus, the majority of the case studies intensively examine these dynamics.

Test results of the selected case studies.[4]

The dynamics of widespread loss aversion were largely validated through the four case studies that were examined. From an expected utility perspective Russia might easily have made much more in the way of opportunistic gains as it put down Turkish oppression of Orthodox Christian Greeks in 1821. But Tsar Nicholas was happy to create an independent Greece to be mutually guaranteed by Russia, France, and Britain. The 1831-39 Eastern Question crises were partially validated by the dynamics of widespread loss aversion. Expected utility is plausible in two phases, first, as Russia took gains as a consequence of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi; second, as British interest in the Levant only became apparent

[4] Refer to the appendix for a detailed summary of case study tests of Prospective Balance Theory.

with the possibility of short routes to India due to the advent of steam technology. Nevertheless, Russian consideration of the interests of France and Britain in a geographical area of its presumed predominance is quite at odds with an expected utility perspective. Moreover, these are two hard cases for mutual resolution because they occurred outside the territorial purview governed by the Congress of Vienna of 1815.

The 1830 Belgian case gives some support to an expected utility perspective only because a minority scholarly view asserts that Britain benefited economically from the reduced power of the United Netherlands with the creation of a neutralized, independent Belgium. The predominant scholarly view is that Britain used the insurance premium in conservative fashion by securing Belgian independence in order to avoid system-wide war pitting the major European powers against a risk acceptant for gain France that covered its ambitions by coming to the aid of Belgium.

Interestingly, the 1848 Italian crisis supports widespread loss aversion with an unexpected, but salutary, finding. On the one hand, French public opinion required that Louis-Phillipe support Italian independence from hated Austria. But on the other hand, Italian possession of Savoy and Nice were the cruel symbols of French defeat as a consequence of the Vienna Treaties and thus were the very objects of French revanche. Palmerston wisely saw that Austria would do well to rid itself of ungovernable Italian provinces by giving them a measure of independence rather than to strictly adhere to the endowment effect.

Thus, the British foreign minister reframed the situation by reminding Louis of the original idea of joining Lombardy to Piedmont, thus obviating French intervention and thus a system-wide war. Palmerston was also able to convince the Austrians to restore the status quo after the latter twice defeated the incompetent Italian army. Such an outcome is not expected by expected utility theory.

The dynamics of affective abandonment of rational consistency were largely validated by the five case studies examined. The eruption of the Crimean War in 1854 is perplexing from an expected utility perspective. The twenty-five year period prior to the war offered ample opportunities for Britain and Russia to object to the mutually increasing encroachment on each other's territorial interests, largely in Central Asia. Additionally, Russia believed that its informal predominance over the Ottoman Empire attained the status of juridical respect by the other major European powers while both Britain and France saw inroads to be made through a consequent whittling away of Russian influence in the area. The Besika Bay and the Don Pacifico incidents, respectively, as well as the Leiningen mission, were canaries in the coal mine for both sides to reckon that there was a serious disjuncture between Britain and Russia regarding their common understanding of a shifting status quo. Moreover, aggressive and overextended positions had unilaterally been taken by both sides, but the lack of significant objection by the other gave each side reason to believe in the rectitude of its actions. Motivated biases, both to aggress as well as to offer little resistance

to such aggression, mutually reinforced the systemic structural imbalance. The French-instigated quarrel over the Holy Places drew Britain into conflict even as it believed that Russia was in the right for protesting. A preference reversal was taken for domestic reasons regarding Russia even as British decision-makers failed to perceive its implications. Despite the unfortunate destruction of the Turkish navy at Sinope, the tsar was largely begging the rest of Europe to intervene in order to restore the status quo. Thus, from an expected utility perspective, since neither Russia nor Britain wanted war with the other, this great power conflict should never have erupted. But Aberdeen failed to control a particularly russophobic foreign minister in Palmerston. Moreover, under the prime minister's direction the cabinet cared more for unity of purpose than of debating significant policy differences that questioned the wisdom of being dragged into war by France against Russia. Aberdeen did so because he did not want France to steal a march on Britain in the Ottoman Empire and he did not have the courage to allow the possibility that his government would fall because of his preference for giving Russia a measure of satisfaction in the Ottoman Empire.

The Franco-Austrian War of 1859 resulting in the unification of Italy is an example of mutual aggressive affective abandonment, but it suffers from a representative bias because the case study is so anomalous. Austria was hated throughout Europe while Italian unity was somewhat championed. Moreover, the Russians and the British did not mind seeing the French and the Austrians

cut each other's throats in order to reduce the latters' pretensions and power. Nevertheless, instead of intervening to keep the revolutionary contagion on the Italian peninsula from spreading, third party major European powers preferred to raise the price that they would have to be paid in order to intervene on one side or the other. Thus, the weary antagonists largely quit the war leaving Italy as the default winner. Both Napoleon and Franz Joseph suffered from motivated biases to prosecute this war. Specifically, allowing Italy to become an independent, potentially antagonistic, major power was not really in France's interest. Austria mistakenly believed that it could treat Italy as it wished, was in high dudgeon over major power interference within its recognized sphere of interest, but blithely believed that Britain and Prussia could be counted on for support and that France would restrain Sardinia. None of the latter occurred. Moreover, Russia would not break with France while Prussia would not side with Austria without each being properly compensated even as these watchful third parties deplored the revolutionary dynamics engulfing Italy and the consequent blatant disregard for dynastic privilege that eventually threatened their own interests. For these reasons affective abandonment wins out over an expected utility perspective.

The last three empirical case studies regarding Bismarck's wars of unification are considered as a piece regarding the dynamics of asymmetric affective abandonment. It is impossible to understand the Franco-Prussian War (1870) without first considering the Franco-British fallout over the failures to

stem Russian and Prussian suppression of the Second Polish Uprising (1863) and the Prusso-Austrian annexation of the Elbe Duchies (1864). The high point of British non-intervention in Continental affairs was the Austro-Prussian War (1866). Thus, one could argue that the inclusion of the Franco-Prussian case study merely gilds the lily regarding testing the theoretical dynamics proposed by affective abandonment. Nevertheless, it was included because the diplomatic history is interesting in its own right, provides additional confirming evidence for the theoretical dynamics, and provides a logical conclusion to a period in European history in which Britain largely absented itself from Continental politics and allowed the balance of power there to significantly change with considerable implications for future interstate aggression.

It is usually believed that using the insurance premium in conservative fashion by making concessions to avoid war promotes peace and stability. But the devil is in the details; thus, the implications from the Second Polish Uprising and the Danish War over the Elbe Duchies point in different directions. The Alvensleben Convention was an overreach by Bismarck that codified Prusso-Russian efforts to disarm Polish insurgents on a common frontier. Alexander did not need Prussian help and gratuitous Prussian interference aroused French ire. Unfortunately, Napoleon was spoiling for a fight with Prussia, and not with Russia, the real culprit in British estimation. French motivation to achieve a foreign policy success was demonstrated when the Alvensleben Convention was allowed to drop, thus giving Napoleon no reason to threaten Prussia. Since the

emperor wanted to maintain the good ties with Russia formed at the conclusion of the Crimean War in order to relieve his dependence on Britain, his preference reversal to threaten Alexander was illogical. A third preference reversal by Napoleon to threaten Austria made no sense even as Alexander attempted to give consideration to the Polish insurgents should they cease and desist. Unnecessary Polish blood was spilled largely due to British support for a cause that it knew it would not support with active intervention. The stakes were higher in Poland than they ever were in Italy; thus, Napoleon, and Palmerston, again as British prime minister, both had to know that the tsar would risk the possibility of system-wide war in order to put down the Polish insurrection. Some evidence for an expected utility perspective inheres in the obvious free hand that Russia had when it put down the insurrection as it saw fit without significant interference. But the Polish insurgents would not listen to their more moderate brethren and they maintained motivated biases to believe both that Russia was weak for conciliating them and that France and Britain would aid them with military support. Thus affective abandonment wins out due to the motivated biases on the parts of the Poles, British, and the French.

Prussia took the lead with Austria in dispossessing the Danes of Schleswig and Holstein, the Elbe Duchies, with almost no dissent from the other major Euorpean powers. Bismarck was keen to secure a naval port at Kiel as well. It is true that both Russia and Austria were against the annexation, but the latter merely went along with Prussia because it feared that the latter would steal a

march on it. Still, the non-interventionist British cabinet ultimately frittered away potential alliance options, thus leaving Palmerston to engage in loud blustering threats directed at Prussia that lacked any semblance of domestic support. Bismarck was unworried after he was able to secure the cooperation of Austria and he then bamboozled the rest of Europe into believing that he was merely upholding international law and thus the status quo by invading the Duchies. France refused to work with Britain as it punished the latter's earlier refusal to aid it in defense of the Polish uprising. Military options were available to Britain both with or without French assistance. With the aid of the Danes and the Swedes, a small British army might be able to thwart the German Confederation advance in the narrow territory of Schleswig and the Jutland. Moreover, the British navy, still the most powerful in the world, would be an adequate deterrent against Confederation naval forces and possibly a sufficient deterrent in itself to stay Bismarck's hand. A better option would have been to enlist the aid of France, but Palmerston mistrusted Napoleon because he feared that the latter wanted territorial revisions for Poland, Italy, and France as the price for his cooperation. Nevertheless, the prime minister failed to risk French adventurism on the Rhine and the chance that his government might fall if it allied with the latter against Prussia. In this sense, Britain used the insurance premium in risky fashion because its failure to act against unprovoked Prussian aggression sundered British influence in Continental affairs regarding the coming Austro- and Franco- Prussian Wars, respectively. Feeling further estranged from Britain,

Napoleon then unwisely reversed preference by offering benevolent neutrality to Prussia in the expectation of unspecified territorial favors to come. This too, was a risky use of the insurance premium because Bismarck merely pocketed this favor but gave nothing in return.

Prussia demanded the Duchies outright from Austria and the latter refused, thus providing the pretext for the casus belli that became the Austro-Prussian War (1866). A rational choice explanation fails because the decision for war or peace did not turn on the possibility for economic compensation to be paid by Prussia to Austria, as Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman assert,[5] but rather on Bismarck's motivated bias to prosecute a war in order to achieve his kleindeutsch plan to unify Germany by expelling Austria. Both a conscientious monarch and a recalcitrant legislature opposed Bismarck's contemplated aggression. But Britain wanted nothing to do with the Austro-Prussian imbroglio while France wanted to profit from the situation by offering benevolent neutrality to the antagonist that was the highest bidder. For its part, Austria had motivated biases to refuse to cede any of its endowments. In particular, giving way in Italy would have stayed Bismarck's hand in Germany while giving way in Germany would have allowed Franz Joseph to maintain his possessions in Italy. But the insurance premium was converted into a risky lottery ticket and thus the Austrians were irrationally risk acceptant for loss to a degree unwarranted by the strategic situation.

---

[5] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 228.

Britain used the insurance premium in risky fashion as well while France converted it into a risky lottery ticket. They would not work together, but singly they might have made a difference. Britain formally refused to endorse what it had earlier championed informally: the cession of Venetia to Italy in order to keep the Italians from allying with the Prussians against Austria. This was the high point of British non-intervention on the Continent and thus the later Franco-Prussian War was merely a coda to the main piece. French support was worth more to Austria before than after the latter's defeat at Sadowa, but Napoleon countermanded his own order to mobilize France against Prussia in defense of Austria. It quickly became clear to the French people that Sadowa was as much an Austrian, as a French, defeat. From a rational choice perspective, Napoleon should either have tolerated the Prussian victory, but made clear to the latter that he would tolerate no further unprovoked aggression, or backed Austria to the hilt. But he did neither and instead asked for compensations from Bismarck after the fact for his benevolent neutrality. Bismarck was later able to publicize this petitioning to the rest of Europe in order to demonstrate France's insatiable greed. On the one hand, Russia objected to Prussian aggression, in particular the dispossession of dynastic privilege, but on the other hand, it remained grateful for Prussian support in suppressing the Poles. Britain was the only power that Russia would work with against Prussia, but it wanted the former to do all the work. Thus, from an expected utility perspective it can be argued bilateral alignments involving Russia, Britain, and France would have stayed Bismarck's

hand. But none of these alignments obtained because all had motivated biases to refrain from taking up against the Prussian. Finally, all of the major European powers save for Austria mistakenly believed that a compact, unified Germany north of the River Main would keep the peace in Europe.

The lead-up to the Franco-Prussian War (1870) began with a series of domestic and foreign policy misadventures that called into question Napoleon's continued rule. The emperor felt betrayed by Bismarck over the latter's late objection to his acquiring Luxembourg from the Dutch. The newly appointed German chancellor mistakenly believed that he could cede German-controlled territory to France without taking sufficient account that German public opinion would object to any cession of its endowments. (The dissolution of the German Confederation as a consequence of the Austro-Prussian War now presented Luxembourg as a possible acquisition for France. The Luxembourgers had no interest in joining the newly formed North German Confederation, but Prussia continued to maintain a military garrison in Luxembourg.) Napoleon threatened war with Prussia, but Britain defused the situation by chairing a congress that successfully neutralized Luxembourg as its military fortress was demolished.

Bismarck mistakenly came to believe that Napoleon was becoming self-deterred from war with Prussia as a consequence of the Luxembourg crisis. This belief was further fostered by a series of Napoleonic foreign policy failures, notably the proposal for a Triple Alliance with Italy and Austria directed against Prussia, and the Belgian Railways dispute. Thus, Napoleon's appointment of the

conciliatory Daru as foreign minister as a cornerpiece of his new Liberal Empire, and the proposal for disarmament with Germany mediated by Britain, was seen by Bismarck as proof that Napoleon now accepted the fact of German unification. Nevertheless, the Prussian's plan to make the king emperor of Germany, as well as a plan to finance a strategic railway through Switzerland, angered the French emperor and he reversed preference by installing the prussophobic Gramont as foreign minister.

Bismarck took up the offer from Madrid to install a German royal on the Spanish throne. An expected utility perspective should have attuned Bismarck to the risk involved in seating German, or German-friendly, governments, on both of France's borders. But he maneuvered to secure the Hohenzollern candidature on the Spanish throne even after Wilhelm forbade to command to Leopold and the royal family initially declined to accept it.

Hard bargaining ensued between Prussia and France that ultimately resulted in the candidature being rescinded. Gramont scored an astounding diplomatic success and an expected utility perspective should predict that he would have been satisfied with his gains. A risky use of the insurance premium succeeded here. But the foreign minister had motivated biases either to further humiliate Bismarck diplomatically or to provoke war against Germany. Thus he converted the insurance premium into a risky lottery ticket. Demanding that Wilhelm promise never to raise the Hohenzollern candidature for the Spanish throne again was both impermissible as well as pointless. As Wilhelm refused,

France declared war on Germany and fought without any other major power allies. It was soundly defeated at Sedan and lost Alsace and Lorraine as territorial compensations to Germany.

Gramont argued that public opinion forced him to take such a stance, but this is quite false as the French people initially took calmly to the news of the candidature. It was Gramont's motivated bias to contest Prussia as evidenced by his whipping up populist anger through inflammatory speeches in the corps législatif as well as his collusion with both the chauvinistic French press as well as right-wing extremist elements. Military timetables for mobilization against Prussia combined with the now artificially wounded French amour-propre to produce the pseudo-certainty principle ahead of the certainty principle such that war became virtually inevitable,[6] not inevitable, as Gramont claimed as the basis for his actions.

None of the major European powers intervened to forbid the war. As in the Austro-Prussian case, they mistakenly underestimated Prussia's chances and continued with the cognitive bias that both France and Russia, and not Prussia, were the prime disturbers of the peace on the Continent and would remain so into the future. But in the main, the motivated biases on the parts of the major European powers either to engage in the conflict or to refrain from intervening reinforced structural imbalance. Thus, asymmetric affective abandonment is a more plausible explanation than is an expected utility perspective.

---

[6]David Wetzel, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), p. 166.

Implications for theory.

Historically, from the 19th through the 20th centuries, widespread loss aversion (Europe 1815-1853) transitioned to affective abandonment (Europe 1854~1880), to be followed more loosely by perceptual syndrome (pre-World War I and somewhat pre-World War II) and then intentional clarity (Cold War). This sequence of events may only be empirical and not necessarily theoretical. Long-cycle theory of international relations might have something to offer here, but its theoretical underpinnings have been the subject of significant criticism.[7] Nevertheless, it is important to try to determine the signals that one systemic dynamic is changing to another if only, perhaps, to try to stem the degradation from peace to war. After examining the dynamics of widespread loss aversion and affective abandonment, three aspects deserve further consideration. First, unlike a number of constructivist accounts of the Concert of Europe,[8] calls for a congress at times were not seen by the satisfied major powers as an opportunity

[7] Joshua S. Goldstein, Long cycles: prosperity and war in the modern age (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); George Modelski, Long Cycles in World Politics (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985); Nathaniel Beck, "The illusions of cycles in international relations," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 35 (1991), pp. 455-76; John Conybeare, "Weak cycles, length, and magnitude of war: duration dependence in international conflict," Conflict Management and Peace Science, vol. 12, no. 1 (1992), pp. 99-116; Richard Rosecrance, "Long cycle theory and international relations," International Organization, vol. 41, no. 2 (Spring 1987), pp. 283-301.

[8] See, for example, William H. Daugherty, "System Management and the Endurance of the Concert of Europe," in Snyder and Robert Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), Chapter 4; Paul W. Schroeder, "Did the Vienna Settlement Rest on a Balance of Power?" American Historical Review, vol. 97, no. 3 (January 1992), pp. 683-708.

to problem solve, but rather as an attempt by a revisionist power to upset the agreed upon status quo. Second, the reversion to isolationism on the part of a major power withdrew a safety net for the less secure powers and thus an important check against the flourishing of motivated biases based on affect as the bases for unilateral foreign policy actions. Finally, while ultimatums issued do not largely seem to have been heeded by target states, demands for compliance in perpetuity always failed in their purpose. One has to ask whether states would take such precipitate action in the absence of an understanding that third and fourth parties would provisionally back their legitimate interests, but put a check on illegitimate ones. If the answer is no, as I suspect that it is, then states that withdraw their support for defending the status quo have to expect that such dynamics are likely to flourish. I take up these issues in turn.

The Vienna Treaties at the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars were a grand bargain among the victorious major European powers. But Britain detested Austria's repeated attempts to make Vienna the diplomatic center of the Concert. Thus, Castlereagh blocked Metternich's effort to call a congress during the 1821 Greek crisis,[9] while Palmerston refused an Austrian-inspired congress during the 1831 Eastern Question crisis.[10] Nevertheless, eventually congresses successfully solved the Greek, Eastern Question, and Belgian, crises, respectively.

---

[9] Schroeder, Metternich's Diplomacy at its Zenith (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), pp. 251-66.
[10] Charles K. Webster, The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1 (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), pp. 281-82.

France harbored revisionist ambitions, but nevertheless accepted responsibility for its previous aggression even as it continued to arouse some distrust throughout Europe.[11] Foreign minister Russell's rebuff of Napoleon III's proposal in 1863 for a congress to consider the status of Poland as well as to review the 1815 settlement reveals displeasure at raising hopes and expectations that the status quo powers might be unable to gratify or suppress.[12] An 1866 proposal to call a congress was rebuffed because Britain considered it a French trap to commit London to the cession of Venetia by Austria to Italy.[13] Since Austria agreed to the proposal provided that no territorial changes be allowed, France then lost interest in the project. More seriously, in 1859 Russia proposed that France call a congress to consider the disposition of Italy. It was proposed in order to mitigate German distrust of Napoleon. But the emperor acceded to the proposal, not to peaceably consider a revision of the Vienna Treaties, but to force Austria into war considering that the latter would be prevailed upon to make concessions. Moreover, Russia used the congress proposal as a means to keeping the war limited.[14]

---

[11] Rosecrance and Chih-Cheng Lo, "Balancing, Stability, and War: The Mysterious Case of the Napoleonic International System," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 40, no. 4 (December 1996), pp. 479-500.
[12] Herbert C.F. Bell, Lord Palmerston, vol. 2 (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1966), p. 351.
[13] Richard Millman, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 20.
[14] G.J. Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," The Historical Journal, vol. 20, no. 1 (March 1977), p. 130.

An 1864 London conference was a sham proceeding in that Bismarck demanded and received a victor's peace in annexing the Elbe Duchies. Moreover, he acceded to the conference in order to assuage the rest of Europe that he was upholding international law and the status quo even as he increased the intensity of his prosecution of war against Denmark.[15] Still a congress was successfully called to conclude the Crimean War (Paris Treaty of 1856) and a conference defused the Luxembourg crisis (1867). Thus, the record of congresses and conferences in Europe from the period 1815-1870 is somewhat mixed; less successful after the advent of the Crimean War than before the war since a number of powers later developed motivated biases to promote their own interests rather than to solve problems in a manner congenial to the rest of the major powers, and perhaps even the minor powers as well.

The change from widespread loss aversion to affective abandonment was marked by a series of events in which Britain, under various governments, isolated itself from Continental politics. This had the effect of removing a security guarantor and thus abetted the promotion of motivated biases on the part of France, Austria, and Prussia to seek security through unilateralism. During the early part of the Concert period, Britain under the direction of Palmerston in the foreign office, successfully aligned with France and thus restrained Louis-Phillipe from precipitate action to overturn the status quo. During the Belgian crisis, Palmerston gave the rest of Europe a security

---

[15] Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 249.

guarantee against French aggression. Thus, the conservative powers refrained from contesting French and British military efforts to separate Belgium from the United Netherlands. Although this required a British threat of war should France not leave Belgium, the possibility of system-wide war was defused with Britain's guarantee to the rest of Europe to restrain France. Again, in 1839 Palmerston threatened France if it did not desist in demanding better terms for its Egyptian renegade client Mehemet Ali, much to the relief of Russia. During the 1848 revolutions, Palmerston was able to put an end to a plan for Prussian aggression against Russia over Poland with French military support and British neutrality. Moreover, he refused to allow Prussia to aid Schleswig and Holstein to revolt against Denmark. Finally, as noted above, he reframed the crisis in Austria over Italian revolt to give a measure of independence to Piedmont and Lombardy. This had the effect of allowing Napoleon III to remain both uninvolved and to retain popular support in France.

The outcome of the Crimean War was the catalyst for separating the French from the British. Aberdeen failed to use Britain's leverage in the Franco-British relation to restrain Napoleon from prosecuting a disastrous war with Russia that none of the antagonists wanted to fight. Disillusionment with France led the British to withhold support for her attempt to aid the Poles against Russia and Prussia. In turn, France mistrusted Britain to the point that both refused to work together to deter Prussia and Austria from annexing the Elbe Duchies. This marks the point when Napoleon makes common cause with Bismarck as the

revisionist power on the Continent. Regarding the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian Wars, Britain adopts strict neutrality, thus allowing Prussia to aggressively unify Germany at the same time that Napoleon's regime crumbles. Political observers in Britain saw that Napoleon was engaging in desperate and risky gambits to maintain himself in power, but there seemed to be no effort to connect Britain's increasing isolation from Continental affairs to the emperor's declining predicament. Moreover, Bismarck rightly came to believe that Britain need not count as an opponent in attempts to aggressively unify Germany.

For its part, Britain was increasingly engaged in domestic problems, notably efforts at increasing the voting franchise. Moreover, foreign policy attention was more and more directed toward imperial ventures and problems within its empire. But thoughtful observers rightly saw that withdrawing from Continental affairs diminished Britain's weight in having a voice internationally. Non-intervention was ultimately a losing game. Thus, from a self-interested perspective, continued intervention in Europe had much to recommend it. Palmerston was more clear-eyed than others. He wanted to see Germany organize in order to be an effective counterweight to the historically revisionist powers in Europe, France and Russia. But he was not taken in by arguments that Prussia would be a liberal bulwark against eastern authoritarianism. Both the influential diplomat Morier and Queen Victoria developed motivated biases to believe otherwise; the latter for familial dynastic reasons. But as it became obvious that Bismarck was co-opting liberalism in order to unify Germany from

above, arguments for continued non-intervention shifted from enthusiasm for the project to the belief that both Austria and France would prevail in any contest with Prussia. The lightning quick defeat of Austria by Prussia at Sadowa should have forced a reconsideration of Bismarck's prospects by the British but it did not. Thus, it was easy for Britain to continue to believe that its non-intervention was the correct policy choice even after evidence that it was spectacularly failing.

In the two cases in which threats in the form of demands for future guarantees were issued, neither succeeded. Interestingly, both instances emanated, not from desperation, but from an overrating of the degree of leverage held by the issuer over its target audience. In the lead-up to the Crimean War, Nicholas appointed the arrogant and indiscreet Menshikov to intimidate the Sultan into revoking the decree (firman) granting new privileges to the French in the Holy Places. While this demand was legitimate because it asked for a return to the status quo, the tsar ratcheted up his demands. Menshikov thus demanded future compliance that no more disturbances would take place. Moreover, a convention (sened) was demanded in lieu of a mere firman. Orlov, the brilliant Russian diplomat, importuned his sovereign to satisfy himself with a return to the status quo. But Nicholas wanted the Sultan to cede control of twelve million Christians within the latter's territorial purview. The tsar was thus demanding Turkish subservience to Russia in perpetuity, failing to understand that such a demand would never be acceded to by any major European power. Turkey had options and it thus refused Russia and petitioned for help from France and

Britain, thus provoking the Crimean War.[16] Nicholas suffered from defensive avoidance here, but in a somewhat weak form since he claimed to be cognizant of the need to back off from his demands should he encounter significant resistance. But the resistance that he had in mind was from the western powers and not from Turkey whom he gave little thought to.

As noted above, the Franco-Prussian War was touched off when Gramont instructed ambassador Benedetti to demand of Wilhelm that not only would the latter publicly approve Leopold's renunciation but also publicly promise that Leopold's candidature for the Spanish throne never be raised again.[17] Wilhelm earlier conceded to the first demand, but the latter demand for the future was impermissible because it encroached on his sovereign right to rule. Benedetti offered sage advice to Gramont to satisfy himself with this return to the status quo. But instead of being satisfied with scoring an astounding diplomatic success in exposing Bismarck's machinations, the foreign minister overinterpreted the degree of leverage that he had in the situation, overreached, and then tumbled his nation into a disastrous war with Prussia. Gramont's attitude here is a strong instance of defensive avoidance.

In both instances cited, precipitate action was warned against by seasoned diplomats within both the tsar's, and emperor's, circle of advisors, respectively, but was rebuffed. Yet, in both instances, Russia and France were largely isolated.

---

[16] Wetzel, The Crimean War: A Diplomatic History (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, NY, 1985), p. 50.
[17] Erich Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1964), pp. 171-72.

Russia developed a motivated bias to believe that Britain would not object to its heavy-handed action, while France received warnings from the British, but no diplomatic support. Considering that two major power wars that should never have been fought erupted over these overreaches, the lack of third party checks to deter states from illegitimate demands was certainly costly in the final analysis.

Relevance for current policy.

The current world economic crisis, and in particular, the potential unraveling of the Eurozone, suffers from a number of dynamics similar to the shift from widespread loss aversion to affective abandonment examined here. Events are moving so fast that little confidence can be placed in any policy prescription. But the stakes are exceedingly high and thus elucidation of the similarities seems warranted.

In an interconnected world economy, the United States would surely see any domestic recovery imperiled by an unraveling of the Eurozone, but it seems to be standing on the sideline due to fractiousness within the Congress to commit the U.S. to any significant problem-solving, both domestically and abroad. China seems to be the suitor of choice for any European bailout money since the U.S. seems to have absented itself. Still, one sees similarities in the diplomatic dynamics over the disposition of the Ottoman Empire prior to the Crimean War and the dynamics of the present crisis. Germany is as Britain was and France is as Russia was. The infelicitously dubbed PIIGS (Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece,

and Spain) seem akin to the declining Turkish Empire. As the most influential state in the Eurozone, Germany has steadfastly supported bailouts in trade for austerity measures taken in Greece. Italy is the third-largest, while France is the second-largest, economy, respectively, in the Eurozone. Italy is following the decline of Greece and now there are whispers that France may be next. Dubbed as the politics of 'Merkozy,' there is the presumption that German chancellor Merkel and French president Sarkozy have a common understanding of the status quo. This may not be so; Sarkozy's recent comment that it was a mistake to allow Greece to join the Eurozone in 2001[18] merely throws gas on the fire. It is unclear why Sarkozy made the comment. Was he pandering to domestic displeasure? Or was he signaling to Germany that it might be better to precipitate the demise of the Eurozone, just as Russia did to Britain in the 1850s regarding the disposition of the Ottoman Empire? Or was Sarkozy directing his unfortunate comment to domestic and international audiences? Without a firmer understanding between France and Germany of the limits that both will go in order to keep the Eurozone together, unintended conflict between the two may occur. If France intends to precipitate the breakup of the Eurozone while Germany recognizes this as a distinct possibility, but will take determined steps to prevent it (analogously just as Russia and Britain conducted themselves regarding the Ottoman Empire), a chaotic transition may occur, thus certainly

[18] "Nicolas Sarkozy: Greece should have been denied euro" bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe (October 28, 2011).

throwing the world economy back into recession and very possibly into depression.

While better communication between France and Germany is needed, the antidote of holding endless multilateral conferences may be counterproductive. In essence, talk has largely substituted for action such that many believe that Europe has been too dilatory in its response and thus may have run out of time to fix the problem. The lack of bold imaginative steps at the outset of the crisis has allowed the small technical steps of bailout money in trade for austerity measures to be outdated and insufficient as the problem begins to morph into possible wholesale default by major European economies.

It is doubtful that Germany could hold the Eurozone together by itself; it certainly would not have the domestic support to do so if put in that predicament. Thus, it is incumbent that the largest states with the most stake in the disposition of the Eurozone communicate frankly with each other and try to achieve a common understanding regarding the status quo that is quickly shifting beneath their collective feet. Otherwise, those states will largely go their own way and promote unilateral policy options based on affect in order to assuage domestic political opinion. Short-term risks will have been avoided only to usher in longer-term disasters.

Bibliography

Abelson, Robert P., et. al., Theories of Cognitive Consistency: A Sourcebook (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1968).

Ackerlof, George A., and William T. Dickens, "The Economic Consequences of Cognitive Dissonance," American Economic Review, vol. 72, no. 3 (June 1982), pp. 307-19.

Ackerlof and Janet Yellen, "Can small deviations from rationality make significant differences in economic equilibria?" American Economic Review, vol. 75, no. 4 (September 1985), pp. 708-20.

Adelman, Kenneth L., "Liberating Iraq would be a cakewalk," Washington Post, February 13, 2002.

Adolphs, Ralph and Antonio R. Damasio, "The interaction of affect and cognition: A neurobiological approach," in Joseph P. Forgas, ed., Handbook of affect and social cognition (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates, 2001).

Agénor, Antoine, duc de Gramont, La France et le Prusse avant la guerre (Paris: E. Dentu, 1872).

Albrecht-Carrié, René, Italy from Napoleon to Mussolini (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950).

—, A Diplomatic History of Europe since the Congress of Vienna, rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

Alhakami, Ali, and Paul Slovic, "A psychological study of the inverse relationship between perceived risk and perceived benefit," Risk Analysis, vol. 14, no. 6 (1994), pp. 1085-96

The American Heritage Dictionary, 2nd ed., (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1985).

d'Ancona, Alessandro, ed., Constantino Nigra: Poesie originalli e tradotti (Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1914).

Anderson, Matthew S., The eastern question 1774-1923: a study in international relations (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966).

—, "Russia and the Eastern Question," in Alan Sked, ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848, (London: Macmillan, 1979).

Archives des Affaires Etrangères (Paris: Ministèr des Affaires Estrangères).

Arnaud, René, translated by E.F. Buckley, Second Republic and Napoleon III (New York: Putnam, 1930).

Art, Robert J., "Bureaucratic politics and American foreign policy: A critique," Policy Sciences, no. 4 (1973), pp. 467-90.

Ashley, Evelyn, Life and Correspondence of Henry John Temple, viscount Palmerston, vol. 1 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1879).

Axelrod, Robert, The evolution of cooperation (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

Bacevich, Andrew J., American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

—, "He told us to go shopping: Now the bill is due," Washington Post.com, October 5, 2006.

Balzacq, Thierry, and Robert Jervis, "Logic of mind and international system: a journey with Robert Jervis," Review of International Studies, vol. 30, no. 4 (2004), pp. 559-582.

Barker, Nancy Nichols, "Austria, France, and the Venetian Question: 1861-1866," Journal of Modern History, vol. 36, no. 2 (1964), pp. 145-54.

Bartlett , C.J., Peace, War and the European Powers 1814-1914 (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996).

Bazerman , Max H., "Negotiator judgment," American Behavioral Scientist, vol. 27, no. 2 (1983), pp. 211-28.

Beck, Nathaniel, "The illusions of cycles in international relations," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 35 (1991), pp. 455-76.

Becker, Josef, "Bismarck, Prim, die Sigmaringen Hohenzollern und die spanische Thronfrage," Francia, vol. 9 (1981), pp. 435-72.

Bell, Herbert C.F., Lord Palmerston, vols. 1 and 2 (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1966).

Benedetti, Edouard, "Ma Mission à Ems" Revue de Paris, vol. 5 (September 15, 1895).

Benson, Arthur C., and Viscount Esher, eds., The Letters of Queen Victoria, vols. 1 and 2 (London: John Murray, 1908).

von Bernhardi, Theodor, Der Streit um die Elbherzogthümer (BiblioBazaar, [pre-1923] 2008).

Betts, Richard K., "Conventional Deterrence: Predictive Uncertainty and Policy Confidence," World Politics, vol. 37, no. 2 (January 1985), pp. 153-79.

—, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Graham T. Allison, Albert Carnesale, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., Hawks, Doves, and Owls: An Agenda for Avoiding Nuclear War (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1985).

—, "Collective Security and Arms Control in the New Europe," in Betts, ed., Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1994).

Billy, George J., Palmerston's Foreign Policy: 1848 (New York: Peter Lang, 1993).

Blaas, Richard, ed., Il Problema Veneto e l'Europa, 1859-1866, vol. 1 (Venice: Instituto veneto di scienze, lettre ed arti, 1966).

Bolsover, G. H., "Lord Ponsonby," Slavonic and Eastern European Review, vol. 13, no. 37 (July 1934), pp. 98-118.

Bonnin, Georges, ed., Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957).

Bossy, Raoul, "Napoléon III et l'Autriche de Villafranca à Sadowa 1859-1866," in Revue d'histoire diplomatique vol. 73, no. 3 (September 1959), pp. 220-30.

Boulding, Kenneth E., "National Images and International Systems," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 3, no. 2 (1959), pp. 120-131.

—, "The Learning and Reality-Testing Process in the International System," in John C. Farrell and Asa P. Smith, eds., Image and Reality in World Politics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), pp. 1-15.

Bourne, Kenneth, Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

Bradley, James, "Diplomacy that will live in infamy," New York Times, December 6, 2009.

Brandenburg, Erich, Otto Hoetzsch, and Hermann Oncken, eds., Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens 1858-71, vols. 2, 3, 8, and 10 (Oldenburg: Historischen Reichskommission, 1938).

Brewer, Marilynn B., and Roderick M. Kramer, "Choice Behavior in Social Dilemmas: Effects of Social Identity, Group Size, and Decision Framing," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, vol. 50, no. 3 (1986), pp. 543-49.

Brickman, Philip, and Charles Horn, "Balance Theory and Interpersonal Coping in Triads," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, vol. 26, no. 3 (1973), pp. 347-55.

Bridge, F. Roy, "Allied Diplomacy in Peacetime: the Failure of the Congress 'System'," in Alan Sked, ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848 (London: Macmillan, 1979).

Bridge and Roger Bullen, The Great Powers and the European States System 1815-1914 (London: Longman, 1980).

Broadman, Harry G., "China and India Go to Africa: New Deals in the Developing World," Foreign Affairs, (March/April 2008).

Brooks, David, "The Fatal Conceit," in New York Times, October 26, 2009.

Bruner, Jerome, Jacqueline Goodnow, and George Austin, A Study of Thinking (New York: Wiley, 1956).

Buckle, George Earle, and William F. Monypenny, Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, vol. 4 (London: Macmillan Co., 1910-20).

Buckle, ed., Letters of Queen Victoria, 3rd series, vol. 2 (London: J. Murray, 1931).

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, The War Trap (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

Bulwer, Sir Henry Lytton, and the Hon. Evelyn Ashley, The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, vols. 2, 4, and 5 (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1876).

Caesar, Egon, Count Corti, translated by Brian and Beatrix Lunn, The Reign of the House of Rothschild 1830-71 (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1928).

Cain, Peter, "Capitalism, War, and Internationalism in the Thought of Richard Cobden," British Journal of International Studies, vol. 5, no. 3 (October 1979), pp. 229-47.

Calvert, Randall L., "Rational Actors, Equilibrium, and Social Institutions," (mimeo, University of Rochester, 1998).

Camerer, Colin F., "Individual Decision Making," in John H. Kagel and Alvin E. Roth, eds., The Handbook of Experimental Economics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

Campbell, George D., Eighth Duke of Argyll, Autobiography and Memoirs, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1906).

Case, Lynn M., French Opinion on War and Diplomacy during the Second Empire (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954).

Cavour, Count Camillo, Luigi Chiala, ed., Lettere Inedite, vol. 3, nos. 1-14 (Turin: Roux ec., 1887).

Chalamon de Bernardy, E., Un fils de Napoleon: Le Compte Walewski, 1810-1869 (Paris, 1954) [unpublished thesis].

Chamberlain, Muriel E., Lord Aberdeen (Cardiff: GPC, 1983).

—, 'Pax Britannica'? British Foreign Policy 1789-1914 (London: Longman, 1988).

Charles-Roux, Francois, Alexandre II, Gorchakoff et Napoleon III (Paris: Plon, 1913).

Cheney, Richard, interview with Tim Russert, Meet the Press, March 16, 2003.

Christensen, Thomas J. and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," International Organization, vol. 44, no. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 137-68.

Christensen, "Conclusion: System Stability and the Security of the Most Vulnerable Significant Actor," in Jack Snyder and Robert Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

Church, Clive H., Europe in 1830: Revolution and Political Change (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983).

Churchill, Winston, The Second World War, vol. 3: The Grand Alliance (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950).

Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

Clark, Chester W., Franz Joseph and Bismarck: The Diplomacy of Austria before the War of 1866 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934).

—, "Prince Gorchakov and the Black Sea Question 1866," American Historical Review, vol. 48, no. 1 (October 1942), pp. 52-60.

Clarke, John, British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy 1782-1865: The National Interest (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

Clayton, G.D., Britain and the Eastern Question: Missolonghi to Gallipoli (London: University of London Press, 1971).

"Top Bush officials push case against Saddam," CNN.com, September 8, 2002.

Coase, Ronald H., "The Nature of the Firm," Econometrica N.S., vol. 4, issue 16 (November 1937), pp. 386-405.

Collingham, H.A.C., The July Monarchy: A Political History of France 1830-1848 (London: Longman, 1988).

Conacher, J.B., The Aberdeen Coalition 1852-1855 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968).

Conybeare, John, "Weak cycles, length, and magnitude of war: duration dependence in international conflict," Conflict Management and Peace Science, vol. 12, no. 1 (1992), pp. 99-116.

Cook, Katherine Schach, "Russia, Austria, and the Question of Italy, 1859-1862," in The International History Review, vol. 2, no. 4 (October 1980), pp. 542-65.

Copeland, Dale C., "Do Reputations Matter?" Security Studies, vol. 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1997), pp. 33-71.

Coppa, Frank J., The Origins of the Italian Wars of Independence (New York: Longman, 1992).

Copson, Raymond W., "Congo (formerly Zaire)," Congressional Research Service Issue Brief for Congress (2001).

Cornicelius, M., ed. Heinrich von Treitschkes Briefe, vol. 3, part 2, (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 1920).

Coser, Lewis A., The Functions of Social Conflict (New York: Free Press, 1956).

Cowles, Loyal, "The Failure to Restrain Russia: Canning, Nesselrode, and the Greek Question, 1825-1827," International History Review, vol. 12, no. 4 (November 1990), pp. 688-720.

Craig, Gordon A., "Great Britain and the Belgian Railways Dispute of 1869," American Historical Review, vol. 50, no. 4 (July 1945), pp. 738-61.

—, The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955).

—, "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power," in C.P.T. Bury, ed., The New Cambridge Modern History, vol. 10: The Zenith of European Power 1830-70 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

—, Germany: 1866-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

Crankshaw, Edward, Bismarck (London: Macmillan, 1981).

Crawley, C.W., The Question of Greek Independence (New York: Fertig, 1973).

Cunningham, Allan, "Stratford and the Tanzimat," in William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers, eds., Beginnings of Moderization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

Curtiss, John S., "Russian Diplomacy in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," South Atlantic Quarterly, vol. 72, no. 3 (Summer 1973), pp. 396-405.

—, Russia's Crimean War (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1979).

Cyert, Richard, and James G. March, A Behavioral Theory of the Firm (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

Daugherty, William H., "System Management and the Endurance of the Concert of Europe," in Jack Snyder and Robert Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

Davis, James A., "Structural Balance, Mechanical Solidarity, and Interpersonal Relations," American Journal of Sociology, vol. 68, no. 4 (January 1963), pp. 444-62.

Deutsch, Karl W. and Morton A. Kaplan, "The Limits of International Coalitions," in James N. Rosenau, ed., International Aspects of Civil Strife (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

Dinerstein, Herbert S., "The Transformation of Alliance Systems," American Political Science Review, vol. 59, no. 3 (September 1965), pp. 589-601.

Einhorn, Hillel J., and Robin M. Hogarth, "Confidence in judgment: Persistence of the illusion of validity," Psychological Review, vol. 85, no. 5 (1978), pp. 395-416.

Elliot, Henry G., Some Revolutions and Diplomatic Experiences (London: J. Murray, 1922).

Elrod, Richard B., "Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860-1866," Central European History, vol. 4, issue 2 (1971), pp. 149-70.

Eyck, Erich, Bismarck and the German Empire (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1964).

Farnham, Barbara, "Roosevelt and the Munich Crisis," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

Fay, Sidney B., The Origins of the World War, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1928).

Finnemore, Martha, National Interests in International Society (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

Fischer, Fritz, Germany's Aims in the First World War (New York: Norton, 1967).

—, War of Illusions: German Policies from 1911 to 1914, trans. Marian Jackson (London: Chatto and Windus, 1975).

Foreman, R.E., "Resignation as a collective behavior response," American Journal of Sociology, vol. 69, no. 3 (November 1963), pp. 385-90.

France Ministère des Affaires Étrangère, Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-71, vols. 4, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 23, 24 and 28 (Paris: Ficker [etc.] Imprimerie Nationale, 1910).

Freidjung, Heinrich, Der Kampf um die Vorlherrschaft in Deutschland, 1859-1866, 9th ed., vol. 2, app. 2, (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta, 1904).

—, Der Krimkrieg und die österreichische Politik (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1911).

Friese, Christian, Russland und Preussen vom Krimkrieg bis zum Polnischen Aufstand (Berlin: Ost-Europa-verlag, 1931).

Fritz, Charles E., in Robert K. Merton and Robert A. Nisbet, eds., Contemporary Social Problems: An Introduction to the Sociology of Deviant Behavior and Social Disorganization (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961).

Fritz and Harry B. Williams, "The human being in disaster: a research perspective," Annals 309, no. 1 (January 1957), pp. 42-51.

Gaddis, John Lewis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

—, We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

Gall, Lothar, translated by J.A. Underwood, Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, volume 1, 1851-1871 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986).

Geiss, Imanuel, ed., July 1914: The Outbreak of the First World War: Selected Documents (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967).

George, Alexander L., Presidential decisionmaking in foreign policy: The effective use of information and advice (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980).

George and Andrew Bennett, Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005).

Geuss, Herbert, Bismarck und Napoleon III: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der preussich-französisischen Bezziehungen 1851-1871 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1959).

Gillard, David, The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914: A Study in British and Russian Imperialism (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1977).

Glaser, Charles L., "The Political Consequences of Military Strategy: Expanding and Refining the Spiral and Deterrence Models," World Politics, vol. 44, no. 4 (July 1992), pp. 497-538.

Goddard, Stacie E., "When Right Makes Might: How Prussia Overturned the European Balance of Power," International Security, vol. 33, no. 3 (Winter 2008/09), pp. 110-42.

Goldstein, Joshua S., Long cycles: prosperity and war in the modern age (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

Gooch, George P., ed., The Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, 1840-1878, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1925).

de La Gorce, Pierre, Historire de la Seconde République, vol. 2 (Paris: Plon, 1904).

Goriainov, Serge, "The Secret Agreement of 1844 between Russia and Great Britain," Russian Review, vol. 1, no. 3 and no. 4 (1912), pp. 85-115 and pp. 76-91.

—, "Les étapes de l'alliance franco-russe (1853-1861)," in Revue de Paris, vol. 12 (1912).

Graham Papers, Cambridge University Library.

Greville, Charles, Henry Reeve, ed., Memoirs, 3rd ed., vol. 6 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1875-77).

Grieco, Joseph M., "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," in David A. Baldwin, ed., Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Grimstead, Patricia Kennedy, The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I: Attitude and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

Guedalla, Philip, Palmerston, 1784-1865 (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1927).

Hafez, Mohammed M., "Armed Islamist Movements and Political Violence in Algeria," Middle East Journal, vol. 54, no. 4 (Autumn 2000), pp. 572-91.

Halperin, S. William, "The Origins of the Franco-Prussian War Revisited: Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne," Journal of Modern History, vol. 45, no. 1 (March 1973), pp. 83-91.

Hamblin, Robert L., "Group integration during a crisis," Human Relations, vol. 11, no. 1 (February 1958), pp. 67-76.

Hamerow, Theodore S., The Social Foundations of German Unification 1858-1871, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

Hammerschlag, Carl A., and Boris M. Astrachan, "The Kennedy Airport snow-in: an inquiry into intergroup phenomena," Psychiatry, vol. 34, no. 3 (August 1971), pp. 301-08.

Hanotaux, Gabriel, John C. Turner, trans., Contemporary France (NY: G.P Putnam's Sons, 1903).

Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series.

Harary, Frank, R. Z. Norman, and Dorwin Cartwright, Structural Models: An Introduction to the Theory of Directed Graphs (New York: John Wiley, 1956).

—Harary, "A Structural Analysis of the Situation in the Middle East in 1956," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 5, no. 2 (1961), pp. 167-78.

Harris, James, 3rd Earl of Malmesbury, Memoirs of an Ex-Minister, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley, 1884).

Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv, Vienna.

d'Hauterive, Ernest, , ed., Herbert Wilson, trans., Napoléon III et le Prince Napoléon (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, [1925] 1970).

Healy, Brian and Arthur Stein, "The Balance of Power in International History: Theory and Reality," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 17, no. 1 (March 1973), pp. 33-61.

Heider, Fritz, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: Wiley, 1958).

Heller, Frank A., Decision-making and Leadership (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Henderson, Gavin B., Crimean War Diplomacy and Other Historical Essays (Glasgow: Jackson, Sons & Co., 1947).

Hertslet, Edward, ed., State Papers, vol. 1, "Denmark and Germany."

—, State Papers, vol. 4, "Denmark and Germany (1864)," nos. 1 and 2.

—, State Papers, vol. 53, "Affairs of Poland," no. 173.

Hildenbrand, Karl, "'British interests' als Staatsräson," 19 Jahrhundert, Mitteilungen der Gessellschaft der Freunde der Universitat Mannheim, vol. 22, no. 2 (1973).

Hinsley, F.H., Power and the Pursuit of Peace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

Hirschleifer, Jack, "The Expanding Domain of Economics," American Economic Review, vol. 75, no. 6, Centennial Essays and 1985 Survey of Members (December 1985), pp. 53-68.

Hochman, Jiri, The Soviet Union and the Failure of Collective Security (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

Holsti, Ole R., and Alexander L. George, "The effects of stress on the performance of foreign policy-makers," in C.P. Cottam, ed., Political Science Annual (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975).

Holsti, "Crisis Decision Making," in Philip E. Tetlock, Jo L. Husbands, Jervis, Paul C. Stern, and Charles Tilly, eds., Behavior, Society and Nuclear War, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Homans, George Caspar, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1950).

Howard, Michael, War in European History (London: Oxford University Press, 1976).

Huber, Ernst Rudolf, ed., Dokumente zur deutschen Verfassungs-geschichte, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1961).

de Hübner, Joseph, Neuf ans de souvenirs d'un ambassadeur d'Autriche à Paris, vol. 2 (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et cie, 1904).

Huntington, Samuel P., "Arms Races: Prerequisites and Results," in Carl J. Friedrich and Seymour E. Harris, eds., Public Policy: A Yearbook of the Graduate School of Public Administration, Harvard University (Brattleboro, VT: Vermont Printing Co., 1958).

—, "Conventional Deterrence and Conventional Retaliation in Europe," International Security, vol. 8, no. 3 (Winter 1983-84), pp. 32-56.

Ike, Nobutaka, ed., Japan's Decision for War (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967).

Inman, Jeffrey, and Marcel Zeelenberg, "Would I rather fight than switch? Consumer regret following switch versus repeat decisions in outcome sequences," unpublished manuscript.

Janis, Irving L. and Leon Mann, Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment (New York: Free Press, 1977).

Jarausch, Konrad H., "The Illusion of Limited War: Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg's Calculated Risk, July 1914," in Central European History, vol. 2, no. 1 (March 1969), pp. 48-76.

Jelavich, Barbara, Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Jervis, Robert, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

—, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," World Politics, vol. 30, no. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214.

—, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Paul Lauren, ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: Free Press, 1979).

—, "Review: Deterrence: Theory Revisited," World Politics, vol. 31, no. 2 (January, 1979), pp. 289-324.

—, "Political Decision Making: Recent Contributions," Political Psychology, vol. 2, no. 2 (Summer 1980), pp. 86-101.

—, "Deterrence and Perception," International Security, vol. 7, no. 3 (Winter 1982-83), pp. 3-36.

—, "Security Regimes," in Stephen D. Krasner, ed., International Regimes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

—, "Introduction: Approach and Assumptions," in Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

—, "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

—, "From Balance to Concert: A Study of International Security Cooperation," in Kenneth A. Oye, ed., Cooperation Under Anarchy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

—, "War and Misperception," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, vol. 18, no, 4 (Spring 1988), pp. 675-700.

—, "Rational Deterrence: Theory and Evidence," World Politics, vol. 41, no. 2 (January 1989), pp. 183-207.

—, The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

—, "A Political Science Perspective on the Balance of Power and the Concert," American Historical Review, vol. 97, no. 3 (June 1992), pp. 716-24.

—, "Political Implications of Loss Aversion," Political Psychology, vol. 13, no. 2, Special Issue: Prospect Theory and Political Psychology (June 1992), pp. 187-204.

—,"Systems and Interaction Effects," in Jack Snyder and Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

—, Systems Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

Joll, James and Gordon Martel, The Origins of the First World War, 3rd ed. (New York: Peason Longman, 2007).

Jomini, Antoine H., Diplomatic Study of the Crimean War (1852-1856) by a Former Diplomat, vol. 2 (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1882).

Jones, Edward E., and Keith E. Davis, "From Acts to Dispositions: The Attribution Process in Person Perception," in Leonard Berkowitz, ed., Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, vol. 2 (New York: Academic Press, 1965).

Kagan, Korina, "The Myth of the European Concert: The Realist-Institutionalist Debate and Great Power Behavior in the Eastern Question, 1821-41," Security Studies, vol. 7, no. 2 (Winter 1997/98), pp. 1-57.

Kahan, Alan, "The Victory of German Liberalism? Rudolf Haym, Liberalism, and Bismarck," Central European History, vol. 22, no. 1 (March 1989), pp. 57-88.

Kahneman, Daniel and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," Econometrica, vol. 47, no. 2 (March 1979), pp. 263-92.

Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Tversky, eds., Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

Kahneman and Tversky, "Choices, values, and frames," American Psychologist, vol. 39, no. 4 (April 1984), pp. 341-50.

Kahneman, Jack L. Knetsch, and Richard H. Thaler, "Experimental Tests of the Endowment Effect and the Coase Theorem," Journal of Political Economy, vol. 98, no. 6 (1990), pp. 1325-48.

Kaiser, David E., "Germany and the Origins of the First World War," Journal of Modern History, vol. 55, no. 3 (September 1983).

Katzenstein, Peter J., Small States in World Markets (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

Kaufman, Charles D., "Out of the lab and into the archives: A method for testing psychological explanations of political decision making," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 38, no. 4 (1994), pp. 557-86.

Kelley, Harold, "The Processes of Causal Attribution," American Psychologist, vol. 28, no. 2 (February 1973), pp. 107-28.

Kennedy, Paul M., The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914 (London: Ashfield Press, 1980).

—, "The Tradition of Appeasement in British Foreign Policy, 1865-1939" in Kennedy, Strategy and Diplomacy 1870-1945: Eight Studies (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983).

—, "The First World War and the International Power System," International Security, vol. 9, no. 1 (Summer 1984), pp. 7-40.

Keohane, Robert O., "Realism, Neorealism, and the Study of World Politics," in Keohane, ed., Neorealism and its Critics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

von Keudell, Robert, Fürst und Fürstin Bismarck, Erinnerungen von 1846 bis 1972 (Berlin: W. Spemann, 1902).

Kim, Kyung-Won, Revolution and the International System (New York: New York University Press, 1970).

King, Bolton, History of Italian Unity, vol. 2 (London: J. Nisbet & Co., 1899).

Kinglake, Alexander W., The Invasion of the Crimea: Its Origin and Account of Its Progress Down to the Death of Lord Raglan, 6th ed., 9 vols. (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood & Sons, 1877).

Kissinger, Henry, A World Restored (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964).

Knetsch, Jack L., "The endowment effect and evidence of nonreversible indifference curves," American Economic Review, vol. 79, no. 5 (December 1989), pp. 1277-84.

Kogan, Nathan, and Renato Tagiuri, "Interpersonal Preference and Cognitive Organization," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, no. 56, no. 1 (January 1958), pp. 113-16.

Kolb, Eberhard, Der Kreigsausbruch 1870: Politische Entscheidungsprozesse und Verantwortlichkeiten in der Julikrise 1870 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970).

Kraehe, Enno E., "Austria and the Problem of Reform in the German Confederation, 1851-1863," American Historical Review, vol. 56, no. 2 (January 1951), pp. 276-94.

—, "A Bipolar Balance of Power," AHR, vol. 97, no. 3 (June 1992), pp. 707-15.

Krasner, Stephen D., "Are bureaucracies important?" Foreign Policy, no. 7 (1972), pp. 159-79.

Krausse, Alexis S., Russia in Asia: A Record and a Study, 1558-1899 (London: G. Richards, 1899).

Lackey, Scott, "The Habsburg Army and the Franco-Prussian War: The Failure to Intervene and its Consequences," War in History, vol. 2, no. 2 (1995), pp. 151-79.

Lakatos, Imre, "Falsification and the methodology of scientific research programs," in Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

Lane-Poole, Stanley, Life of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green, 1890).

Langer, E.J., "The Illusion of Control," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, no. 32, no. 2 (1975), pp. 311-28.

Langer, William L., Political and Social Upheaval 1832-1852 (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).

Lanyi, George A., "The Problem of Appeasement," World Politics, vol. 15, no. 2 (January 1963), pp. 316-28.

Larson, Deborah Welch, Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

Layne, Christopher, "Lord Palmerston and the Triumph of Realism: Anglo-French Relations, 1830-48," in Miriam Fendius Elman, ed., Paths to Peace: Is Democracy the Answer? (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997).

Lebow, Richard Ned, Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crises (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

—, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: Reading the Lessons Correctly," Political Science Quarterly, vol. 98, no. 3 (Autumn 1983), pp. 431-58.

Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," Journal of Social Issues, vol. 43, no. 4 (1988), pp. 5-72.

Legro, Jeffrey W. and Andrew Moravcsik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?" International Security, vol. 24, no. 2 (Autumn 1999), pp. 5-55.

Lesnik, S., "Russia and Prussia in the Schleswig-Holstein Question," Krasny Archiv, vol. 2, no. 93 (1939).

Levy, Jack S., "Quantitative Studies of Deterrence Success and Failure," in Paul C. Stern, Robert Axelrod, Robert Jervis, and Roy Radner, eds., Perspectives on Deterrence (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

—, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," in Barbara Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

—, "Prospect Theory and International Relations," in Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks, ibid..

—, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 41, no. 1 (March 1997), pp. 87-112.

—, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," in David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis, eds., Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Lewin, Kurt, Field Theory in Social Sciences (New York: Harper, 1951).

Lijphart, Arend, "Consociational Democracy," World Politics, vol. 21, no. 2 (January 1969), pp. 207-25.

Lindley, Dan, Promoting Peace with Information: Transparency as a Tool of Security Regimes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

Lipson, Charles, "International Cooperation in Economic and Security Affairs," World Politics, vol. 37, no. 1 (October 1984), pp. 1-23.

Loewenstein, George and David Schkade, "Wouldn't it be nice? Predicting future feelings," in Daniel Kahneman, Ed Diener, and Norbert Schwartz, eds., Well being: The foundations of hedonic psychology (New York: Russell Sage, 1999).

Lowenstein and Jennifer Lerner, "The role of affect in decision-making," in Richard J. Davidson, Klaus R. Scherer, and H. Hill Goldsmith, eds., The handbook of affective science (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Lord, Robert H., "Bismarck and Russia in 1863," American Historical Review, vol. 29, no. 1 (October 1923), pp. 24-48.

—, The Origins of the War of 1870 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924).

Lynn-Jones, Sean M., "Détente and Deterrence: Anglo-German Relations, 1911-1914," in Steven E. Miller, Lynn-Jones, and Stephen Van Evera, Military Strategy and the Origins of the First World War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

M.A.E. Memoires et Documents, Russie.

Mallet, Louis, ed., The Political Writings of Richard Cobden (London: W. Ridgway, 1878).

Mander, John, Our German Cousins: Anglo-German Relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries (London: John Murray, 1974).

March, James G., "Bounded rationality, ambiguity, and the engineering of choice," Bell Journal of Economics, vol. 9, no. 2 (1978), pp. 587-608

Marcus, George E., "The Psychology of Emotion and Politics," in David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis, eds., Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Mardin, Sherif, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962).

Markman, Keith, Igor Gavanski, Stephen Sherman and Matthew McMullen, "The impact of perceived control on the imagination of better and worse possible worlds," Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, vol. 21, no. 6 (1995), pp. 588-95.

Marlowe, John, Perfidious Albion: The Origins of the Anglo-French Rivalry in the Levant (London: Elek Books, 1971).

La Marmora, Alfonso, translated by Gustave Niox and Ernest Descoubès, Un peu plus de Lumière (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1974).

Marriott, J.A.R., The Eastern Question, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947).

Martens, Fedor F., Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie avec les puissances étrangères, vol. 12 (St. Petersburg, 1874-1906).

—, Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'Empire Ottoman, vol. 2 (Paris, 1897).

—, "Russiia i Angliia nakanune razryva (1853-1854 gg.)," Vestnik Evropy (April 1898).

Martin, B. Kingsley, The Triumph of Lord Palmerston (London: Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1924).

Martin, Theodore, Life of the Prince Consort, vol. 4 (London: Smith, Elder, & co., 1880-91).

Maxwell, Herbert, The Life and Letters of George William Frederick, Fourth Earl of Clarendon, vol. 2 (London: Edward Arnold, 1913).

McDermott, Rose, "Prospect Theory in International Relations: The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission," in Barbara Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

—, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," Perspectives on Politics, vol. 2, no. 4 (December 2004), pp. 691-706.

McInerney, Audrey, "Prospect Theory and Soviet Policy Towards Syria, 1966-1967," in Barbara Farnham, ed., Avoiding Losses/Taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

Mearsheimer, John J., "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," International Security, vol. 7, no. 1 (1982), pp. 3-39.

—, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," in Sean M. Lynn-Jones, ed., The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).

—, The Tragedy of Great Power (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001).

Mellers, Barbara A., Alan Schwartz, Katty Ho, and Ilana Ritov, "Decision affect theory: Emotional reactions to the outcomes of risky options," Psychological Science, vol. 8, no. 6 (November 1997), pp. 423-29.

Mérimée, Prosper, Lettres à une inconnue, vol. 1 (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1874).

Mill, John Stuart, A System of Logic: Ratrocination and Inductive (New York and London: Longmans, [1843] 1965).

Benjamin Miller, When Opponents Cooperate: Great Power Conflict and Collaboration in World Politics (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995).

Millman, Richard, British Foreign Policy and the Coming of the Franco-Prussian War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

Mintz, Alexander, "Non-adaptive group behavior," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, vol. 46, no. 2 (April 1951), pp. 150-59.

Modelski, George, Long Cycles in World Politics (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985).

Morgan, Patrick, Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977).

Morgenthau, Hans J., Politics Among Nations, (New York: Knopf, [1948] 1978).

Morley, John, The Life of Richard Cobden, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1903).

—, The Life of William Ewart Gladstone, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1903).

Mosely, Philip E., Russian Diplomacy and the Opening of the Eastern Question in 1839 and 1839 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934).

Mosse, Werner E., "England and the Polish Insurrection of 1863," English Historical Review, vol. 71, no. 278 (1956), pp. 28-55.

—, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958).

—, The Rise and Fall of the Crimean System, 1855-71 (London: Macmillan, 1962).

—, "Queen Victoria and her Ministers in the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis 1863-1864," English Historical Review, vol. 78, no. 307 (April 1963), pp. 263-83.

Murray, Scott W., Liberal Diplomacy and German Unification: The Early Career of Robert Morier (Wesport, CN: Praeger, 2000).

Namier, Lewis B., "1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals," Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. 30 (Oxford: Oxford University Press [1944] 1971).

—, In the Nazi Era (London: Macmillan, 1952).

Nelson, Richard R. and Sydney G. Winter, An Evolutionary Theory of Economic Change (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

Newcomb, Theodore M., Social Psychology (New York: Dryden, 1951).

—, "Interpersonal Balance," in Robert P. Abelson, Elliot Aronson, William J. McGuire, Newcomb, Milton J. Rosenberg, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, eds., Theories of Cognitive Consistency: A Sourcebook (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1968).

Lord Newton, Lord Lyons: A Record of British Diplomacy (London: E. Arnold, 1913).

Nichols, Irby, The European Pentarchy and the Congress of Vienna 1822 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971).

Nigra, Constantine, "Souvenirs diplomatiques 1870," Bibliothèque universelle et revue suisse, vol. 65, no. 195 (1895), pp. 1-25.

Nisbett, Richard E. and Lee Ross, Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings in Social Judgment (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980).

Norris, James A., The First Afghan War, 1838-1842 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

O'Hanlon, Michael E. and Richard C. Bush, III, "China's Rise and the Taiwan Challenge," brookings.edu/opinions, (May 3, 2007).

Omond, G.W.T., "Belgium: 1830-1839," in Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch, eds., The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783-1919, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1923).

Oncken, Hermann, Rudolf von Bennigsen, vol. 1 (Stuttgart und Leipzig: Deutsche Verlags-anstalt, 1910).

—, Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleon III. von 1863 bis 1870, vols. 1-3 (Berlin, 1926).

Paléologue, Maurice, Entretiens de l'impératrice Eugénie (Paris: Plon, 1928).

Palmer, Alan, Bismarck (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976).

—, The Chancelleries of Europe (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983).

Parker, Charles Stuart, ed., Sir Robert Peel, From his Private Papers, vol. 3 (New York: Krauss Reprint Co., [1899] 1970).

—, Life and Letters of Sir James Graham, second baronet, of Netherby, P.C., G.C.B., 1792-1861, vol. 2 (London: 1907).

Pasieka, K.S., "The British press and the Polish insurrection of 1863," Slavonic and East European Review, vol. 42, no. 98 (December 1963), pp. 15-37.

de Persigny, Jean, H. de Laire, Compte d'Espagny, ed., Mémoires, 3rd ed., (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit & cie, 1896).

von Petersdorff, Herman, et. als, eds., Bismarck: Die gesammelten Werke, vols. 1, 5, 6a, 6b, and 6c (Berlin: Otto Stolberg, 1923-33).

Peterson, Susan, "The Domestic Politics of Crisis Bargaining and the Origins of the Crimean War," in Jack Snyder and Robert Jervis, eds., Coping with Complexity in the International System (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

Pflanze, Otto, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Polgreen, Lydia and Howard W. French, "China's Trade in Africa Carries a Price Tag," New York Times, World Section: Africa (August 21, 2007).

Die Politischen Berichte des Fürsten Bismarck aus Petersburg und Paris, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1920).

Posen, Barry R., "Review Article: Competing Images of the Soviet Union," World Politics, vol. 39, no. 4 (July 1987), pp. 579-97.

Pottinger, E. Ann, Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966).

—, The Origins of the Crimean Alliance (Charlottsville: University of Virginia Press, 1977).

Powell, Robert, "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory," in David A. Baldwin, ed., Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Roger Price, The French Second Empire: An Anatomy of Political Power (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Public Records Office, London, foreign office, Parliamentary Papers.

Puryear, Vernon J., England, Russia, and the Straits Question, 1844-56 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1931).

—, "New Light on the Origins of the Crimean War," Journal of Modern History, vol. 3, no. 2 (June 1931), pp. 219-34.

—, International Economics and Diplomacy in the Near East, 1834-53 (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1935).

Quattrone, G.A., and Amos Tversky, "Contrasting Rational and Psychological Analyses of Political Choice," American Political Science Review, vol. 82, no. 3 (September 1988), pp. 719-36.

Quester, George, Offense and Defense in the International System (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977).

Ramm, Agatha, review of Lothar Gall, Bismarck, der weisse Revolutionair (Frankfurt: Propyläen Verlag, 1980) in English Historical Review, vol. 96, no. 381 (October 1981), pp. 880-83.

Redlich, Joseph, Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria: A Biography (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, [1929] 1965).

Reid, Rachael R., in Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch, eds., Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy (1783-1919), vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923).

Reid, Stuart J., Lord John Russell (London: Sampson, Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., 1895).

Reilly, Ann, "How Bush decided he sees Saddam Hussein as another Hitler," money.cnn/magazine/com/fortune, February 11, 1991.

Rendall, Matthew, "Russia, the Concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821-29," Security Studies, vol. 9, no. 4 (Summer 2000), pp. 52-90.

—, "Defensive Realism and the Concert of Europe," Review of International Studies, vol. 32 (2006), pp. 523-40.

Renouvin, Pierre, and Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, Introduction l'histories des relations internationales, vol. 5 (Paris: A. Colin, 1966).

Revue des deux mondes.

Riasonovsky, Nicholas V., Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959).

Richardson, Lewis, Statistics of Deadly Quarrels (Pittsburgh: Boxwood Press, Chicago: Quadrangle, 1960).

Ridley, Jasper, Lord Palmerston (London: Constable & Co., 1970).

Ritov, Ilana, and Jonathan Baron, "Reluctance to vaccinate: Omission bias and ambiguity," Journal of Behavioral Decision Making, vol. 3, no. 4 (1990), pp. 263-77.

Rodkey, Frederick S., "Anglo-Russian Negotiations about a 'Permanent' Quadruple Alliance," American Historical Review, vol. 36, no. 2 (January 1931), pp. 343-49.

Rose, Gideon, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," (paper presented at the 1997 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C.).

Rosecrance, Richard, "Long cycle theory and international relations," International Organization, vol. 41, no. 2 (Spring 1987), pp. 283-301.

—Rosecrance and Chih-Cheng Lo, "Balancing, Stability, and War: The Mysterious Case of the Napoleonic International System," International Studies Quarterly, vol. 40, no. 4 (December 1996), pp. 479-500.

Ross, Dennis, "Risk aversion in Soviet decision-making," in J. Valenta and W. Potter, eds., Soviet decisionmaking for national security (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984).

Rotstein, F., "K istorii franko-russkogo soglasheniia 1859 g." Krasnii Arkhiv, vol. lxxxviii, no. 3 (1938).

Royal Archives, Windsor.

Sagan, Scott D., "The Origins of the Pacific War," Journal of Disciplinary History, vol. 18, no. 4 (1988), pp. 893-922.

Samuelson, William and Richard Zeckhauser, "Status Quo Bias in Decision Making Sunk Costs," Journal of Risk and Uncertainty, vol. 1 (1988), pp. 7-59.

"Nicolas Sarkozy: Greece should have been denied euro" bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe (October 28, 2011).

Sartori, Giovanni, "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics," American Political Science Review, vol. 64, no. 4 (December 1970), pp. 1033-53.

Schelling, Thomas, Arms and Influence (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).

Schivelbusch, Wolfgang, The Culture of Defeat (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001).

Schlitter, Hanns, Aus der Regierungszeit Kaiser Franz Joseph I. (Wien: Druck und Verlag von Adolf Holzhausen, 1919).

Schmitt, Bernadotte E., "The Diplomatic Preliminaries of the Crimean War," American Historical Review, vol. 25, no. 1 (October, 1919), pp. 36-67.

Schotter, Andrew, The Economic Theory of Social Institutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

Schroeder, Paul W., Metternich's Diplomacy at its Zenith (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969).

—, "World War I as Galloping Gertie: A Reply to Joachim Remak," Journal of Modern History, vol. 44, no. 3 (September 1972), pp. 319-45.

—, Austria, Great Britain and the Crimean War: The Destruction of the European Concert (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972).

—, "Alliances, 1815-1914: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management," in Klaus Knorr, ed., Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1976).

—, "The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure," World Politics, vol. 39, no. 1 (October 1986), pp. 1-26.

—, "Did the Vienna Settlement Rest on a Balance of Power?" American Historical Review, vol. 97, no. 3 (January 1992), pp. 683-708.

—, The Transformation of European Politics: 1763-1848 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

—, "Embedded Counterfactuals and World War I as an Unavoidable War," in Schroeder, Robert Jervis, David Wetzel, and Jack S. Levy, eds., Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

Schweller, Randall L., Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

—, Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

Seignobos, Charles, "Le Declin de l'Empire et d'establishement de la 3rd republique 1854-1875" in Ernest Lavisse, ed., Histoire de France contemporaine, vol. 7 (Paris: Hachette, 1921).

Seton-Watson, Robert W., Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955).

Sheehan, James J., "Liberalism and Society in Germany, 1815-48," Journal of Modern History, vol. 45, no. 4 (December 1973), pp. 583-604.

Showalter, Dennis, Railroads and Rifles: Soldiers, Technology, and the Unification of Germany (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1975).

—, Wars of German Unification (New York: Arnold Publishers, 2004).

Simon, Herbert A., Models of Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Models of Bounded Rationality (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982).

—, Models of Bounded Rationality (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982).

Simpson, Frederick A., Louis Napoleon and the Recovery of France 1848-1856 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1923).

Sked, Alan, "Metternich's Enemies or the Threat from Below, " in Sked., ed., Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848 (London: Macmillan, 1979).

Slantchev, Branislav L., "Territory and Commitment: The Concert of Europe as Self-Enforcing Equilibrium," Security Studies, vol. 14, no. 4 (2005), pp. 565-606.

Slovic, Paul, B. Fischhoff, S. Lichtenstein, B. Corrigan, and B. Coombs, "Preference for Insuring Against Probable Small Losses: Insurance Implications," Journal of Risk and Insurance, vol. 44, no. 2 (1977), pp. 237-58.

Slovic, "Trust, emotion, sex, politics, and science: Surveying the risk-assessment battlefield," Risk Analysis, vol. 19, no. 4 (1999), pp. 689-701.

Slovic, Melissa L. Finucane, Ellen Peters, and Donald G. MacGregor, "Risk as Analysis and Risk as Feelings: Some Thoughts about Affect, Reason, Risk, and Rationality," Risk Analysis, vol. 24, no. 2 (2004), pp. 1-12.

Smith, Denis Mack, Cavour (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985).

Smith, M. Brewster, Jerome S. Bruner, and Robert W. White, Opinions and Personality (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1956).

—, "Attitude Change," in D. Sills, ed., International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

—, "Political Attitudes," in Jeanne N. Knutson, ed., Handbook of Political Psychology (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher, 1973).

Snidal, Duncan, "Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation;" in David A. Baldwin, ed., Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Snyder, Glenn H., "Deterrence and Power," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 4, no. 2 (June 1960), pp. 163-78.

—, Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1961).

—, "The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror," in Paul Seabury, ed., The Balance of Power (San Francisco: Chandler, 1965).

—, Alliance Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

Snyder, Jack, "Rationality at the Brink: The Role of Cognitive Processes in Failures of Deterrence," World Politics, vol. 30, no. 3 (April 1978), pp. 345-65.

—, The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

—, "Perceptions of the Security Dilemma in 1914," in Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

—, Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

Sorel, Albert, Histoire diplomatique de la guerre Franco-Allemande, vol. 1 (Paris: E. Plon et cie, 1875).

—, Essais d'histoire et de critique (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library reprint, 1883).

Southgate, Donald, The Most English Minister: The Policies and Politics of Palmerston (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966).

Spencer, Frank, "Historical Revision no. cxxii: Bismarck and the Franco-Prussian War," History, vol. 40, no. 140 (October 1955), pp. 310-25.

Sproxton, Charles, Palmerston and the Hungarian Revolution (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1919).

von Srbik, Heinrich Ritter, Metternich: der Staatsman und der Mensch, vol. 1 (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1925).

—, Deutsche Einheit: idee und wirklichkeit vom Heilgen reich bis Königgrätz, vol. 2 (Munich: F. Bruckmann ag., 1935).

Stanmore, Aberdeen Correspondence, 1852-55 (London: Colombo, 1885).

Steefel, Lawrence D., The Schleswig-Holstein Question (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932).

—, "Bismarck and Bucher: The Letter of Instructions of June 1870," in Arshag O. Sarkissian, ed., Studies in Diplomatic History and Historiography in Honour of G.P. Gooch (London: Longmans, 1961).

Stein, Arthur A., "Conflict and Cohesion: A Review of the Literature," Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 20, no. 1 (March 1976), pp. 143-72.

—, "Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World," in David A. Baldwin, ed., Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Stein, Janice Gross, "Calculation, Miscalculation, and Conventional Deterrence I: The View from Cairo," in Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Stein, eds., Psychology and Deterrence (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

—, "International cooperation and loss avoidance: framing the problem," in Stein and L. Pauly, eds., Choosing to cooperate: How states avoid loss (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

Steinbruner, John D., The Cybernetic Theory of Decision (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

Strogatz, Stephen, "The Enemy of My Enemy," nytimes.com, February 14, 2010.

Summer, B.H., "The Secret Franco-Russian Treaty of 3 March 1859," The English Historical Review, vol. 48, no. 189 (January 1933), pp. 65-83.

von Sybel, Heinrich, Die Begründung des Deutschen Reiches durch William I. Vornehmlich nach den preussischen staatsacten, vols. 3 and 4 (Munich: R. Oldenburg, 1901).

Taylor, A.J.P., The Italian Problem in European Diplomacy 1847-1849 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934).

—, "Crimea: The War that Would Not Boil," in Rumours of War (London: H. Hamilton, 1952).

—, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954).

Temperley, Harold, "Stratford de Redcliffe and the Origins of the Crimean War," English Historical Review, vol. 48, no. 192 (October 1934), pp. 265-98.

—, England and the Near East: The Crimea (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1964).

Thimme, Friedrich, ed., Otto von Bismarck, Die gesamme Werke, vols. 5, 6, 6b, 9, 14, and 15 (Paderbron, GE: Schöningh Verlag, [1924-35] 2004).

Thompson, J.M., Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

Thurston, G.J., "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," The Historical Journal, vol. 20, no. 1 (March 1977), pp. 121-44.

The Times.

Toulmin, Stephen, Foresight and Understanding (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963).

Trachtenberg, Marc, History and Strategy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

Tversky, Amos and Daniel Kahneman, "Availability: A Heuristic for Judging Frequency and Probability," Cognitive Psychology, vol. 4, no. 1 (1973), pp. 207-32.

—, "Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases," Science, vol. 186, no. 4157 (27 September 1974), pp. 1124-31.

—, "The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice," Science, new series, vol. 211, no. 4481 (January 30, 1981), pp. 453-58.

—, "Rational choice and the framing of decisions," Journal of Business, vol. 59, no. 4, Part 2: The Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory (October 1986), pp. S251-S278.

Tversky and Richard H. Thaler, "Anomalies: Preference Reversals," Journal of Economic Perspectives, vol. 4, issue 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 201-11.

Valesecchi, Franco, La mediazione europea e la definizione dell' aggressore alla viglia della guerra del 1859 (Roma: Vittoriano, 1938).

—, "European Diplomacy and the Expedition of the Thousand: The Conservative Powers," in Martin Gilbert, ed., A Century of Conflict 1850-1950: Essays for A.J.P. Taylor (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1966).

Van Evera, Stephen, "Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War," International Security, vol. 22, no. 4 (Spring 1998), pp. 5-43.

Walker, Mack, ed., Metternich's Europe (New York: Walker and Company, 1968).

Walpole, Spencer, The Life of Lord John Russell, vol. 2 (New York: Greenwood Press, [1889] 1968).

Walt, Stephen M., The Origins of Alliances (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

Waltz, Kenneth N., Theory of International Politics (New York: Random House, 1979).

—, "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds., The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Ward, Adolphus W., and George P. Gooch, eds., Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy (1783-1919), vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923).

Wawro, Geoffrey, The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Weber, Frank G., "Palmerston and Prussian Liberalism, 1848," Journal of Modern History, vol. 35, no. 2 (June 1963), pp. 125-36.

Webster, Charles K., The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841, vol. 1 (New York: Humanities Press, 1969).

—, The Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815 (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969).

Wellesley, F.A., ed., Secrets of the Second Empire, private letters from the Paris Embassy: selections from the papers of H.R.C.W. Cowley (New York: Harper, 1929).

Wemyss, Rosslyn, Life of Sir Robert Morier, vol. 1 (London: E. Arnold, 1911).

—, Life of Sir Robert Morier, vol. 2 (London: E. Arnold, 1911).

Wetzel, David, The Crimean War: A Diplomatic History (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, NY, 1985).

—, A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001).

Whyte, Arthur J., The Political Life and Letters of Cavour 1848-1861 (London: Oxford University Press, 1930).

Wiener, Norbert, Cybernetics, or Control and Communications in the Animal and Machine, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1961).

Williamson, Oliver E., The Economic Institutions of Captalism (New York: The Free Press, 1985).

Wolfers, Arnold, Britain and France Between Two Wars: Conflicting Strategies of Peace Since Versailles (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1940).

—, Discord and Collaboration (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962).

Württembergisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Stuttgart.

Zablotskii-Desiatovskii, A.P., Graf P.D. Kiselev i ego vremia, vol. iii (St. Petersburg: Tip M.M. Stasi u levicha, 1883).

Zaionchkovskii, Andrei M., Vostochnaia voina v sviazi s sovrememnoi ei politicheskoi abstanovki, 4 vols. (St. Petersburg: Ekspedit s ii a zagotoviennii a gos bumag, 1908), Prilozheniia, vol. 1.

—, Prilozheniia, vol. 2.

Zajonc, Robert B., "Cognitive Theories in Social Psychology," in Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson, eds., The Handbook of Social Psychology, 2nd ed. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1968).

—, "Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences," American Psychologist, vol. 35, no. 2 (1984), pp. 151-75.

—, "On the primacy of affect," American Psychologist, vol. 39, no. 2 (1984), pp. 117-23.

Appendix.

Table 2: Case Study Tests of Prospective Balance Theory.

Br: Britain F: France R: Russia A: Austria Pr: Prussia
T: Turkey S: Sardinia P: Poland D: Denmark I: Italy B: Belgium

Systemic Dynamic: Widespread Loss Aversion

Case Study	Principal State(s)	Phase	Endowment Effect Maintained?	Certainty Principle Followed?	Insurance Premium Character
Greek Revolt		1			
(1821)	R		yes	not really	conservative
	Br/A		yes	yes	riskier
	F		no	no	risky
		2			
(1826)	R		not really	no	riskier
	F/Br		yes	yes	conservative

Synopsis: Russia defeats Turkey. An independent Greece is guaranteed by Russia, Britain, and France.

Belgian Revolt (1830)		1			
	Br		no	no	ambiguous
	F		no	no	riskier
	R/Pr		yes	yes	conservative
		2			
	Br		yes	yes	riskier
	F		yes	yes	less risky
	R/Pr		no	no	conservative

Synopsis: Holland attacks Belgium. Britain and France intervene and Holland is expelled from the newly independent Belgium.

Turkish Revolts (1831)		1			
	R		yes	no	conservative
	F		no	no	risky
	Br/A		yes	yes	conservative
	(1839)	2			
	R		no	no	ambiguous
	Br		no	no	ambiguous

	F	no→yes	no→yes	risky→con

Outcome: Egypt attacks Turkey and is rebuffed by Russia. Turkey attacks Egypt, is defeated, but rescued by Russia. Egypt takes some gains.

Italian Revolt (1848)	1			
	Br	no	no	conservative
	A	yes→no	yes→no	risky→con
	F	no→yes	no→yes	risky→con
	2			
	Br	yes	yes	riskier→con
	A	yes	no→yes	risky→con
	F	no	no	risky

Synopsis: Italy attacks Austria twice and is defeated both times. Britain convinces Austria to restore the status quo despite its victories.

Systemic Dynamic: Affective Abandonment

Case Study	Principal State(s)	Phase	Endowment Effect Maintained?	Certainty Principle Followed?	Insurance Premium (Lottery Ticket) Character
Don Pacifico Incident (1850)					
	Br	n/a	yes	no	risky
	F		no	yes	conservative
	R		no	yes	conservative
Leiningen Mission (1851)					
	A	n/a	no	no	risky
	T		yes	no	risky
Crimean War (1854)		1			
	F		no	no	risky
	R		yes	yes	risky
	Br		yes→no	yes→no	con→risky
	T		yes	yes	con

2

F	no	yes	risky→con
R	no	yes	risky→con
Br	no	no	risky (LT)
T	yes	no	risky

Synopsis: Russia mistakenly believes that France and Britain cannot work together as a consequence of the Don Pacifico incident. Russia mistakenly believes that it can do what it pleases in the Ottoman Empire as a consequence of the Leiningen mission. France humiliates Russia over the Holy Places dispute. Russia, in turn, humiliates Turkey with the Menshikov mission. France and Britain attack and barely defeat Russia in defense of Turkey. Turkey is admitted to the Concert of Europe. Russia loses the Romanian Principalities as well as the right to operate its navy on the Black Sea.

Austro-Italian War (1859) 1

F	no	no	risky
S	no	no	risky
R	no	no	ambiguous
A	yes	yes	risky
Br	no	yes	riskier

2

F	no	no	risky (LT)
S	no	no	risky (LT)
R	no	ambiguous	risky→con
A	yes	no	risky (LT)
Br	no	no	riskier→con

Synopsis: France and Sardinia contrive to attack Austria while Russia promises to 'hold the ring' for the aggressors. Austria refuses concessions and attacks Sardinia. Austria is defeated by Sardinia with French support. An independent Italy is declared with French and British diplomatic support.

Bismarck's Wars of Unification

Second Polish Uprising (1863) 1

R	yes	no	conservative
P	no	yes	risky
Pr	no	no	risky
B	no	no	riskier
F	no	no	riskier
A	yes	yes	conservative

	2			
R		yes	no	riskier
P		no	no	risky
Pr		no	no	risky→con
B		yes	yes	riskier→con
F		no	yes	risky
A		yes	yes	conservative

Synopsis: Russia, in concert with Prussia, puts down a Polish revolt. Britain remonstrates Russia while France threatens Prussia. France then threatens Russia and finally, Austria. Britain refuses to support France and Russia successfully suppresses the Polish revolt. Russia is grateful to Prussia for its support.

Danish War (1864)	1			
Pr		no	yes	risky
A		no	yes	risky
D		yes	no	risky
Br		yes	no	conservative
F		yes	no	conservative
R		yes	yes	conservative
	2			
Pr		no	yes	risky
A		no	yes	risky
D		yes	no	risky
Br		no	yes	con→risky
F		no	yes	con→risky
R		yes	yes	conservative

Synopsis: Denmark incorporates Schleswig. Prussia and Austria respond by occupying both Holstein and Schleswig. Britain, France, and Russia decline to intervene despite vocal support for the Danes from the former two states. France secretly asks for compensations from Prussia but is rebuffed. Prussia and Austria annex the two Elbe Duchies without dissent from the other major European powers.

Austro-Prussian War (1866)	1			
Pr		no	yes	risky
A		yes	yes	risky
R		no	yes	risky
Br		no	yes	risky

F		no	yes	risky
I		no	yes	risky
	2			
Pr		no	yes	risky
A		yes	yes	risky (LT)
R		no	yes	risky
Br		no	yes	risky
F		no	yes	risky (LT)
I		no	yes	risky

Synopsis: Austria mobilizes against Prussia due to the latter's demand to annex the Elbe Duchies outright. Prussia dissolves the German Confederation and declares war on Austria. Austria defeats Italy at Custozza but is routed by Prussia at Sadowa. France asks for compensations from Prussia but is rebuffed. Prussia takes the Elbe Duchies and ejects Austria from Germany.

Luxembourg Dispute (1867)	1			
Pr		no	no	conservative
F		no	no	conservative
Br		no	no	conservative
	2			
Pr		yes	yes	riskier
F		no	no	risky
Br		no	no	conservative

Belgian Railways Dispute (1868)	1			
F		no	no	conservative
B		no	yes	conservative
Br		no	no	conservative
Pr		yes	no	conservative
	2			
F		no	ambiguous	con→risky
B		yes	yes	con→risky
Br		no	no	conservative
Pr		yes	no	conservative

Synopsis: France attempts to buy Luxembourg from Holland. Initially Prussia does not object but then publicly does so. France threatens war but is restrained by Britain. The issue is peaceably resolved when Luxembourg becomes a neutral power and Prussia removes the garrison there. France then petitions to buy two railways from Belgium in a purely commercial transaction. The Belgian government becomes alarmed and hostilities are threatened between the former

and France. Belgium finally retains the railways but pays an indemnity to France. Britain becomes increasingly estranged from France while Prussia believes that France is becoming self-deterred due to Prussian military power.

Kaiser Project (1870)		n/a			
	Pr		yes	no	risky
	F		yes	yes	risky
Switzerland Railway Project (1870)		n/a			
	Pr		no	yes	risky
	F		yes	yes	risky

Synopsis: Prussia attempts to make its king the emperor of Germany. France threatens war. Additionally, Prussia angers France by financing a railway through Switzerland. Again, France is angered but backs down from war with Prussia. Prussia mistakenly believes that France is self-deterred.

Franco-Prussian War (1870)		1			
	F		yes	yes	risky
	Pr		no	yes	risky
	Br		yes	yes	conservative
	A		no	no	conservative
	R		no	no	conservative
	I		no	no	conservative
		2			
	F		yes	yes	risky (LT)
	Pr		yes	yes	ambiguous
	Br		yes	yes	conservative
	A		no	no	conservative
	R		no	no	conservative
	I		no	no	conservative

Synopsis: Prussia attempts to install a German ruler on the Spanish throne. France objects and Prussia rescinds the offer. France wants a guarantee that the candidature will never be raised again to which Prussia refuses. France declares war on Prussia but is routed at Sedan. Prussia annexes Alsace and Lorraine as compensation, thus estranging France from Prussia.